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EDITORIAL

STATE OF DISUNION

Twenty years ago, Lyndon Johnson stood before Congress and saw a nation in a state of crisis. The Tet offensive was a historic defeat for the United States and the turning point in the march of empire. In the months that followed, cities would burn, college campuses would erupt, great leaders would be murdered, the economy would suffer lasting structural damage and the majority political party would be rent by an insurgency, a split it has not yet repaired. It was a terrible year, and a glorious time as well.

Ronald Reagan's presidency was a product of that crisis, and as he stood at that same podium in the House last week, he faced a nation that is quieter but no less deranged than the one Johnson saw. The deep division Reagan has created over Central America recapitulates the one over Vietnam. The social condition of the country's minorities is basically not much better than at the time of the uprisings following the killing of Martin Luther King Jr. Students again are starting to contest the culture of greed and conformity that marked the beginning of the movements of the 1960s. The great flaws in the structure of Reaganomics are painfully obvious. And the two parties are struggling to find a new majority on which to base their agendas.

The forces that produced the twenty years' crisis (to borrow E.H. Carr's term for the interwar period) are still in contention. As the anniversaries of the events of 1968 arrive, conventional critics smugly assume that the old disruptive elements have been defeated. But we are, in effect, all "sixties people" now. Listen to the way politicians discuss gender and race, see what economists write about late capitalism, look at the response to rebellion at the edges of empire. Reagan missed all that when he surveyed the Union, but then he has slept through much of his pathetic term.

THE SILENCE ON ISRAEL
Christopher Hitchens

THE MISKITOS COME HOME
Ana Carrigan

HOW AGNOS DID IT
Arlene Stein

CHINA'S 'PERESTROIKA'
André Schiffrin

DEREGULATION BY SLEAZE
Frank Donner
James Ledbetter

RACE AND POVERTY
Adolph Reed Jr.

THE IOWA BOWL

STRATEGIC SHIFT TO THE LEFT

ANDREW KOPKIND

Des Moines

Class war is raging in Iowa. Robert Dole, millionaire friend of Midwestern entrepreneurs, evokes his po' boy beginnings to score populist points against aging millionaire preppy George Bush, promoter of Houston oilers. Former Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt, who called out his National Guard to break the Phelps Dodge copper workers' strike in 1983, now says he will break the stranglehold of the huge I.B.P. meatpacking company on the industry's exploited workers. Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, who takes credit for an economic miracle based in good measure on the development and manufacture of war merchandise, is running powerful TV spots about Central America, featuring an antiwar message more radical than anything seen sixteen years ago in George McGovern's campaign. Richard Gephardt, who voted for a farm bill in 1985 that secured the power and profits of agribusiness, is now campaigning against its giants, Cargill and Conagra. Jesse Jackson made a political career bidding for a black share of corporate largesse; now he viciously (if only rhetorically) bites the hands that fed his movement. Babbitt tells his audiences that "Marxism is dead." That may be true back in the S.S.R.s, but it looks lively out here.

In the closing hours of the Iowa campaign, the candidates are crowding the left side of their respective party spectrums. Republican Dole presents himself as a model of compassion and a paragon of pacifism. He is suddenly squishy on *contra* aid, almost delirious for détente. Even Bush knows enough to eschew the rigors of Reaganism. Jack Kemp, who has not been much of

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LETTERS.

WAITING FOR THE REAL STORY

Chicago

Unprecedented events are taking place in occupied Palestine, to the point that *The New York Times* has been roused out of its usual tendency to treat news related to Israel in that complacent and self-preoccupied way that makes it seem as if it belonged in the metropolitan rather than the international section of the paper. Here, the *Chicago Tribune* has been giving the riots front-page banner coverage and intense, thoughtful analysis. Even the networks are covering this story, since it provides them with their precious visuals.

And *The Nation*? In the issue of December 26/January 2, we are treated to Amos Kenan's confused account ["Violence in Gaza"], which tells us for the umpteenth time about the Larnaca, Cyprus, killing of two Israelis nearly three years ago, about the killing of an Israeli reservist who happened to be a peacenik, about the burning to death of Jewish families and about the slaying of Jews in the markets of Gaza, and which still manages to shoehorn in the oldest line in the book: "The clause concerning the annihilation of Israel remains in the Palestinian covenant."

As for the ostensible occasion for these ramblings, we learn next to nothing: for example, the fact that by the third week of December twenty-five young Palestinians had been shot to death by Israeli troops (or fifteen, if you believe the official Israeli figures; even in death the Palestinians are not entitled to be accurately counted, nor can the reporters apparently manage to check on the paltry number of names involved). Some of them may have been peaceniks, or perhaps bystanders, but that too rates not a mention.

Perhaps it is time to have a Palestinian write from occupied Palestine on this subject (novel thought!), instead of refracting it for your readers through Israeli lenses, however sympathetic they may or may not be.

Rashid Khalidi

KENAN REPLIES

Tel Aviv

1) Kenan does not recount for the umpteenth time the killings of innocent people because they are Israeli Jews. He does it for the first time.

2) There is no umpteenth time for deploring the lives taken from innocent people. Innocent people should never be killed.

3) In the Israeli press, where Kenan talks to his own people daily and weekly, where he is not a spokesman for any establishment, Kenan deplored for the umpteen-umpteenth time the slaying of innocent Palestinians. Unlike Mr. Khalidi in his ivory tower, Kenan and his likes are exposed to threats, smears, and are accused of treason. When they meet with Khalidis—and they do—they risk imprisonment.

4) The clause in the Palestinian covenant about the annihilation of Israel should really be, once and for all and with no bullshit excuses, removed. I shall say it for the umpteenth time—and for as many times as I shall call on Israel to make peace with the Palestinians, to recognize their right for self-determination, for statehood and freedom. The deletion of this clause must come prior to, not after, peace.

5) I don't like Jewish intellectuals who hide behind Auschwitz so that they can't see what is being done to the Palestinians. Equally, I don't like Palestinian intellectuals who behave in the same way. In short, I don't like officials, even when only semi-such. I prefer poets, for whom justice, moral values and humanity have no private address.

Amos Kenan

SOME ADDITIONAL PARAGRAPHS

New York City

The "Letter From Israel" by Amos Kenan [Nov. 21, 1987], despite his claim to the contrary, is indeed making a critical commentary regarding kibbutz Beit Alfa's production of antiriot armored cars equipped with water cannons. This criticism is valid, as far as it goes, and if readers of *The Nation* would like to send letters opposing the kibbutz's decision to produce such vehicles and sell them abroad, I invite them to send them to me, and they will be forwarded directly to the secretary of the kibbutz.

However, as one of *The Nation*'s rare articles on Israel, the "letter" may be less than valid. Moreover, due to *The Nation*'s rather poor coverage of Israel in general, or the Socialist-Zionist left and the kibbutz movement in particular, most *Nation* readers might have a partial, and therefore twisted, picture.

Even assuming that the description of the Likud-Palestinian episode was accurate (it was), the implication that "Beit Alfa's police car" is the only way that anyone is dealing with the "situation" is devious. Indeed, while the story about Beit Alfa was one that should be brought to the attention of *Nation* readers, it is, indeed, one "short paragraph in the long history of Socialist Zionism"—a much longer story than one would ever guess from reading your pages.

Another short paragraph might have noted that while the Lebanon war was going on, dozens of busloads of members of Hashomer Hatzair kibbutzim were daily demonstrating at the Israel-Lebanon border, calling for an end to the war. They were also demonstrating in Jerusalem and in Tel Aviv. And the Knesset representatives of Mapam, the United Workers Party of Israel, which as Kenan noted was formed by Hatzair, were the first Zionist members of the Israeli Parliament to call for a halt to the invasion of Lebanon, as well as an investigation as to why that war was started.

The Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz movement (the Kibbutz Artzi Federation), which now has eighty-six member kibbutzim, established the Givat Haviva Institute as its center for education, research and training in 1949. Today, nearly 30,000 people—city people as well as kibbutzniks, Arabs and Jews, Ashkenazim and Sephardim—attend courses, seminars and encounter groups on Arab-Jewish relations, Israeli and Middle Eastern history, culture and politics, community organizing, Arabic and Hebrew, the Holocaust and Jewish resistance, among others. Topics discussed include ways to resolve the legitimate demands for self-determination and national liberation that have been made by both Palestinians and Jews. But a short paragraph on the Givat Haviva Institute, another part of the long history of Socialist Zionism, has not yet appeared in *The Nation*'s pages.

When Christopher Hitchens recently went to Israel, he devoted his dispatch to a lengthy exposition on a member of the Knesset. It was not a Socialist Zionist or another parliamentarian whose ideas might be close to those of the average *Nation* reader. It was, rather, Meir Kahane. Out of 120 members of the Knesset, he was singled out. I am sure we are not alone in being disappointed in not finding the words of, or descriptions of, the small band of Knesset members that one would consider to be within the pale of acceptability in your pages.

Beit Alfa's police car is not the only way to deal with the Palestinian issue. If anyone is interested, Mapam has been suggesting another way: the way of dialogue, negotiation, compromise and peace. For nearly two decades, we have been advocating negotiations between the government of Israel and any Palestinian group or faction that renounces terrorism and recognizes Israel—even if that is within the framework of so-called mutual recognition, and even if that means talking with our adversaries within the Palestine Liberation Organization. We believe that Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza must end, and that it has had a malignant effect upon Israeli society as a whole, not to mention the effect it has had on the Palestinians living there.

These short paragraphs are necessary paragraphs, without which one will get a totally inaccurate picture of what Socialist Zionism is, and what it believes. We also believe that our approach to the conflict can be part of a mutually acceptable solution to the Palestinian question, one which is needed not only by Palestinians but by Jews as well.

Amiram Efrati
United Workers Party
of Israel

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EDITORIALS.

Time to Say No

"Taking the War to Nicaragua" is the title of a secret report that Robert McFarlane wrote in 1981. The Reagan Administration has been doing exactly that ever since—in defiance of Congress, the U.S. criminal code, the World Court and the wishes of a majority of Americans. Now it is asking Congress to approve $32.65 million in "nonlethal" *contra* aid and $3.6 million in military aid, the latter to be placed in escrow until March 31, pending successful cease-fire negotiations.

This proposal might be seen as a significant retreat by the Administration, which originally sought $270 million for its mercenary force, but given the cowardice Congress has regularly displayed on the issue of *contra* aid, it is also politically astute. The "nonlethal" aspect is designed to soothe those in Congress who want to pretend they are not financing a war; the escrow account, absurdly, to give the appearance of U.S. good faith. Meanwhile, the C.I.A. would likely continue to oversee the disbursement of "nonlethal" funds, making whatever dollar amount Congress approved irrelevant, and Reagan himself would set the terms under which certification would proceed for releasing the escrowed

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funds. After July 1 he could appeal to Congress for yet more aid.

The vote in the House, scheduled for February 3 as of this writing, will be decided by a bloc of about forty representatives, most of them Democrats, many of them from the South. Their districts are conservative but generally opposed to *contra* aid. They face a simple choice: "vote their district" and oppose aid, or vote Washington and approve it. That a people's right to self-determination and the absolute moral wrong of imperialism are not arguments enough to sway the timid in Congress is deplorable. More conventional arguments, however, remain compelling and must again be impressed upon the swing voters.

First, aid to the mercenaries violates international law and flouts the Central American peace plan. In that plan the five Presidents called on all "governments in and outside the region that openly or covertly provide military, logistic, financial, propaganda, manpower, armament, ammunitions, and equipment assistance to irregular forces or insurrectional movements, to cease such assistance, as an essential element for . . . peace." Thousands of civilians have died in Nicaragua as a direct result of U.S. policy over the past seven years, and U.S. military intervention in all the countries of the region has escalated. To vote additional aid for the *contras* would be to endorse those crimes.

Second, the aid package mocks Congress. To approve *any contra* aid after all the revelations of deceit and corruption in the Iran/*contra* scandal would be to ratify the Administration's utter lawlessness and to confirm to every future official of the executive branch that lying to Congress costs nothing and in fact may be a useful way to achieve unpopular goals.

The stakes of the *contra* aid vote demand an extraordinary appeal to the swing voters, listed below. As Representatives they have an obligation not only to their constituents but to all the residents of their states and the people of the nation. We urge our readers to call them through the Capitol Hill switchboard, at (202) 224-3121.

Michael Andrews (D-Tex.)
Les Aspin (D-Wis.)
Charles Bennett (D-Fla.)
Jim Chapman Jr. (D-Tex.)
Robert Davis (R-Mich.)
Glenn English (D-Okla.)
Ronnie Flippo (D-Ala.)
Bill Frenzel (R-Minn.)
William Goodling (R-Pa.)
Willis Gradison Jr. (R-Ohio)
Fred Grandy (R-Iowa)
Bill Grant (D-Fla.)
Frank Guarini (D-N.J.)
Steve Gunderson (R-Wis.)
Charles Hatcher (D-Ga.)
Jimmy Hayes (D-La.)
Paul Henry (R-Mich.)
Larry Hopkins (R-Ky.)
Amory Houghton (R.-N.Y.)
Carroll Hubbard Jr. (D-Ky.)
H. Martin Lancaster (D.-N.C.)
Jim Lightfoot (R-Iowa)
Marilyn Lloyd (D-Tenn.)
Buddy Mackay (D-Fla.)
Romano L. Mazzoli (D-Ky.)
Raymond McGrath (R-N.Y.)
Tom McMillen (D-Md.)
John Miller (R-Wash.)
Alan Mollohan (D.-W.Va.)
Sid Morrison (R-Wash.)
Elizabeth Patterson (D-S.C.)
J.J. Pickle (D-Tex.)
Melvin Price (D-Ill.)
Carl Pursell (R-Mich.)
Ralph Regula (R-Ohio)
J. Roy Rowland (D-Ga.)
Patricia Saiki (R-Haw.)
Larry Smith (D-Fla.)
Robert Smith (R-Oreg.)
Olympia Snowe (R-Me.)
John M. Spratt Jr. (D-S.C.)
Richard H. Stallings (D-Ida.)
Wes Watkins (D-Okla.)
Jamie Whitten (D-Miss.)

Manigat Shmanigat

What took place in Haiti on January 17 was by no stretch of the imagination an election. It was a selection. Its consequence is that on Sunday, February 7, the second anniversary of the flight into exile of Jean-Claude Duvalier, a man named Leslie Manigat will be sworn in as President of Haiti.

Media treatment of the "election" has done little to derail the strategy of the ruling National Governing Council (C.N.G.). It is not that reporters have ignored the violence, the fraud and the cynicism of the C.N.G. The problem is that old familiar culprit, the news frame. Journalists gravitate toward the symbolism of elections like moths to a flame. Interpreting the outcome means choosing, from the spectrum of available possibilities, the candidate who best parrots the language of democracy.

The fact that the spectrum is rigged and irrelevant matters little. Two months ago, when honorable democrats like Marc Bazin, Sylvio Claude, Louis Dejoie 2d and Gerard Gourgue contested the presidency, it was they who defined the issues, they who acted as sources and yardsticks for the press. But now it is as if they never existed. *The New York Times* gives us a special "Man in the News" feature on Manigat, which reports that, "Of the eleven candidates running in the second election, he had by far the most impressive credentials." The alternative sources on fraud and fairness are no longer the Gourgues and the Claudes but Manigat's defeated rivals in the January 17 travesty, nonentities all of them.

On the eve of the independently run November 29 vote, Manigat's campaign collapsed; he too was a nobody. Less than two months later, he has become an articulate academic, a vibrant democrat (a social democrat, even). His rehabilitation is a brilliant public relations coup in which Manigat himself, the C.N.G., the United States and the government of Jamaica have all taken a hand. Manigat is a Duvalierist stooge, and it is pitiful that arguments over his sincerity and independence, far from being laughed out of court, are the topic of the hour.

The opposition, a broad-based front of five of the November candidates, backed by the remarkable seventy-two-member alliance of popular organizations known as Civil Society, now populates the news stories like ghosts—or zombies, in some reporters' clichés—listless, cowed and apathetic. These characterizations are an insult to a vigorous and innovative movement that has genuine popular backing, as it showed in a general strike that paralyzed Port-au-Prince on January 16 and in its mass abstention the next day. The aim of Haitian democrats now is to increase international pressure on the generals and to rob the President-select of his pretensions to legitimacy. In that effort, they deserve support, but above all they deserve attention. They are the other Haiti story, and the real one.

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Strategic

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

a presence in Iowa, started rising rapidly when he dumped the religious right, broke his pact with Pat Robertson in the tangled Michigan delegate fight and joined the "moderate" forces pledged to Bush. Kemp now stands to do well in the late-February primaries in Minnesota and South Dakota, and he has considerable momentum in New Hampshire. The former Reverend Robertson is still the wildest of cards and the major exception to the prevailing trend toward moderation. Polls give him minuscule points statewide here, but his supporters are zealous and his audiences large. The other night Robertson drew an excited crowd of 300 voters in the tiny Greene County seat of Jefferson, a town of only 4,850 souls, where the Posse Comitatus has surfaced in the past and a fundamentalist sect called the Abundant Life Ministries has won wide support even among bankers and business people. But there's no way to know how much of the fundamentalist spirit will be made delegate flesh until the caucuses meet on February 8.

The Democrats are dashing from farm to forum with a kind of desperate enthusiasm that comes from having no good idea of their constituencies, no clear picture of their prospects and no foolproof test of their success. Gary Hart's campaign is in a tailspin, although the polls have not yet quite caught up with the size of the disaster. He still pulls people off the street, but the celebrity watchers are not likely to be caucus goers. In Boone, Hart spoke to a standing-room only crowd from behind the counter at Hoppy's Diner. He waved a tattered copy of his ninety-four-page campaign "brochure" in one hand and his twelve-page "budget" in the other, but fiscal issues were the last thing on the Boon-ers' minds. A dozen giggling pre-teen-age schoolgirls in pink sweaters crowded into two booths for the show. Obviously, they've seen Donna Rice's ads for jeans on MTV. They *were* Donna Rice. Gary had come to Boone to take them off to Bimini.

Dukakis, Gephardt and Paul Simon have reached the saturation point with their TV commercials. Although they still have pots of money to spend, they have already wallpapered the screen from *Today* to *Tonight* and cannot reach any more voters than they now have covered. Dukakis's Nicaragua spot is brutal and effective. It begins with black and white footage of tortured babies and smoldering jungle villages, with the candidate's voice-over: "Stop the killing, and stop the conflict. . . . Stop the shooting war." Simon's one minute has him addressing a convention of some sort with his familiar metasignification of Truman, Humphrey and Mondale. Gephardt has chosen the TV anchor approach, preferring to evoke the authoritative Tom Brokaw rather than any old disingenuous politician.

"Gephardt can deliver a tough message in a nonthreatening way," former Democratic National Committee political director Ann Lewis observed. "He looks like Tom Sawyer, a person who can be trusted to make authoritative statements. TV has magnified him; he's more real there than in person. His success shows the primacy of paid media over grass-roots organizing."

Gephardt's rebound is strong after a long season in the doldrums, and he may well emerge the winner in what is now a very tight race among the Iowa Six (Gore is still pouting about the voters' liberal bias and has taken his marbles to the white, right South). Last month Gephardt called in his 200-odd campaign workers from around the country and designated upward of $300,000 for TV time in a last-ditch drive to take the caucuses, a "kamikaze attack on the Battleship Iowa," as one Republican candidate's press person saw it. He reminds some voters of a less smarmy Jimmy Carter, a kind of generic Democrat who is difficult to place and hard to really dislike. In fact, Gephardt's progress through the long Iowa campaign recapitulates Carter's winning way, so far. Republican insiders consider him a "formidable" threat to Bush in the election. He has scored with Hyundai-bashing and has appropriated Jackson's anticorporatist attack to good advantage. He even uses Jackson's rhymes (about corporations that *merge* and then *purge* workers), but then they all do. As *The Des Moines Register* wrote after a forum in Ames, Jackson "provides the metaphors" and sets the terms of the Democrats' debate.

Most comparisons between Jackson and Robertson are fatuous and the stuff of network news bites and burned-out punditry, but it is true that both their campaigns have the flavor of social and political movements, and both have solid support in an otherwise volatile situation. Simon, for instance, was virtually in a dead heat with Gephardt and Dukakis in the *Des Moines Register* Iowa Poll two weeks before caucus night, but his level of voter commitment was extremely low. Breakouts in the last week of campaigning are common. In the last poll before the caucuses in 1980, Ronald Reagan was nine points ahead of George Bush. Bush ended up the big winner.

Jackson can't pull off a coup of that magnitude, but if he does well with the farmers and college-town progressives he's been organizing for a year, he could hit double digits and thus considerably enhance his position in white America. It's a long shot. His problem (although hardly the only one) is that the general swing to the left by the other candidates (always excepting Gore) has made it hard for him to distinguish himself in policy terms.

Where Jackson differs is in political analysis and the strategy it produces. He was the last candidate to appear before a forum in Des Moines attended by 1,000 representatives of forty-four organizations across the range of feminism, from the National Organization for Women to the Business and Professional Women of America. The women seemed dispirited. The energies loosed at last summer's NOW convention [see Kopkind, "NOW Redux," *The Nation*, August 1/8, 1987] around the proposed presidential candidacy of Pat Schroeder and in the campaign to defeat the nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court have been sapped by the removal of both those goals. As a fallback program to inject a feminist force

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in the election year, the women drew up an agenda of issues they hoped the candidates would support. The candidates all did.

Then Jackson came out into the hall of the convention center, but instead of tiptoeing to the podium like the others, he burst onto the floor and grabbed the hands of the women in the front rows. Then he jumped up to the stage. "All the other candidates have listed the goodies they'll give you," he began, "but the fundamental issue was omitted by all the candidates except me. The issue is power. If you are empowered you can get your own goodies." That afternoon at the farm forum, Jackson tried to swing the debate around to questions of coalition building, movement organizing and strategy, but it is not an easy task to get American voters to think about power. He has already helped to get them to think about class. That may be enough for one election.

UNCIVIL LIBERTIES.

CALVIN TRILLIN

The news that President Reagan and Japanese Prime Minister Takeshita were "on a 'Ron' and 'Noburu' basis" might have struck me as more encouraging if I hadn't just hung up on a total stranger who began a phone pitch for Shearson Lehman's financial services by saying, "Hi, Calvin. How are you today?" It would have been a mistake to interpret the fact that the Shearson Lehman man had called me by my first name as an indication of a productive relationship, particularly considering what I called him. Also, I was aware that the President and Takeshita's predecessor, Yasuhiro Nakasone, were on a "Ron" and "Yasu" basis right through the time Japan was gobbling up our international markets, dumping television sets on our docks, shutting out our agricultural products and underselling us on souvenirs for our own bicentennial celebration.

I suppose the White House might argue that things could have been a lot worse if Nakasone hadn't tried to go easy on somebody he knew well enough to call "Ron." It may be, after all, that Reagan said something like, "I'd sure appreciate it if you fellows didn't buy California out from under us while I'm in office, Yasu," and Nakasone said, "No problem, Ron. Anything for a pal."

A couple of commentators pointed out that Reagan might have decided to call the Prime Minister "Noburu" after mangling the pronunciation of "Takeshita" so badly in the welcoming ceremony. (The Japanese pronounce "Takeshita" in about a syllable and a half, presumably because pronouncing it the way it looks makes it sound like a vegetable dish that comes with your choice of miso soup or salad.)

According to that theory, we would have had pretty frigid relations with India in the 1950s if Reagan had been President, since he would have called the Indian leader "Prime Minister Nehru" even in the White House swimming pool rather than risk saying, "It's really good to have you here, Jawaharlal." Foreign policy analysts might have later concluded that our foreign policy objectives had shifted toward Africa, since an American President who had been so stiff with a world-renowned Indian seemed absolutely palsy-walsy with the leader of tiny Madagascar—a gentleman Reagan might call "Justin" in order to avoid calling him Prime Minister Rakotoniaina.

Also, if our diplomatic strategy is constrained by the limitations of the President's ability to pronounce foreign names, wouldn't our interests in the South Pacific suffer severely if the King of Tonga, on an official White House visit, suddenly said to Reagan, "Just call me Taufa'ahau Tupou IV"?

Could that be how it's done among heads of state—somebody simply breaks the ice by blurting out, "Just call me Taufa'ahau Tupou IV"? What if the King is known to his friends as "Buzzy"? How did Reagan know that he should call Prime Minister Nakasone "Yasu" rather than "Yasuhiro," which is what a Shearson Lehman salesman who phoned him at dinnertime in Tokyo to discuss I.R.A. opportunities would have called him?

It would be fairly simple to find out how phone-to-phone peddlers decide to use first names. You could just telephone the chief executive officer of Shearson Lehman around dinnertime—according to the Standard & Poor's directory, he's a man named Peter Cohen—and say, "Listen, Peter, I was wondering if you fellows drill in that first-name approach in your Executive Pest Training Program, or is that the sort of thing they teach at the Harvard Business School?"

I mention the Harvard Business School because there is a theory that our international economic problems can be traced to the Harvard Business School's policy of concentrating on the teaching of Money Fiddling 101 while equivalent Japanese institutions teach what is shunned by all ambitious M.B.A.s in this country: the dreary and unfashionable business of manufacturing goods people might want to buy. If the folks at Harvard really are the ones who got us into this mess, maybe they're dumb enough to ignore one of my Uncle Harry's basic rules of life: If someone you don't know starts calling you by your first name, keep your hand on your wallet.

But all of that doesn't tell us anything about how world leaders decide to use first names—or even how they know which first names to use. Is the fact that Yasuhiro Nakasone is known as "Yasu" the sort of thing the C.I.A. finds out? If our side knows that Mikhail Gorbachev's closest friends still call him by an old law school nickname (Motormouth), is that what President Reagan should call him? Did it take protracted negotiations between lower-level diplomats to get Reagan and Takeshita on a first-name basis or did Takeshita, on their first meeting, simply say, "Hi, Ronald. How are you today?" Did Reagan keep his hand on his wallet?

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

The conservative and neoconservative style, as it is applied to American politics and the cold war, boils down to a simple minatory injunction. Whether the subject is nuclear war, "terrorism" or Central America, and whether the dissent is of a pacifist, humanist or socialist character, the dissenter swiftly learns that he or she will be met with the official injunction: "This is a democracy we've got here. So SHUT UP!"

It doesn't terrifically matter, given the contradiction contained in that simple instruction, whether the admonishing intelligence is that of Joseph McCarthy in 1954, Hubert Humphrey in 1968 or Ronald Reagan in 1985. The moral blackmail and the mental limitation are the same. By raising the head of the gorgon Medusa, Perseus was able to turn all opponents into stone. By means of the incantation about democracy, later and cruder figures have been able to freeze the process of debate and argumentation. The trick, which is reminiscent of the "People's Democracies" that they oppose, is to remind the citizen to be grateful. Sure, you have rights, but don't dream of invoking them in a manner that would give comfort to the enemy.

What I have been saying about American attitudes can be applied with redoubled force to the case of Israel and the occupied territories. Here those who call for silence and conformism can call for it even louder. Here the excuse for saying and doing nothing is even more emphatic, and comes decked out in even gaudier moral colors. Criticism is declared irresponsible if not downright treasonous, not because Israel is a democracy but because Israel is *the only democracy in the Middle East*. This notion of embattled democracy has only to be uttered to have its full Medusa effect. The United States pays, through a democratically elected Congress, the greater part of Israel's military budget. Its professors, journalists and citizens circulate freely between the two capitals. It is linked to Israel by a thousand ties of affiliation. Israel thus presents almost the only instance where American activity, by citizens as well as by government, could have any immediate effect. *That* is why nothing must be done or said. Democratic practice is better when praised than when observed. As a result Israeli politics has been slowly taken over by an alliance of the militaristic and the messianic. And American intellectual and moral credit has been kept in the vault, the only safe place for it.

Incessantly we hear the excuse that all this is pardonable, if not quite justified, because no sweet and furry partner for peace has emerged on the "other" side. This evasion, too, can take its place in the long catalogue of "democratic" deceptions. A few years ago in Gaza, I sat in the garden of Dr. Abdul Shafe, a courageous physician who runs the office of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. His job is to dispense medicine and care to a people who live under Israeli direct rule but in conditions like those of Calcutta. A short time before, his clinic had been attacked by a fundamentalist mob, chanting "God is great" and denouncing the secularism of the P.L.O. This was the only time, said the doctor, that Israeli troops and security police had not intervened in a disorder. Other evidence painstakingly recorded by Israeli journalists showed a pattern of collusion between the occupying authorities and the Islamic extremists. Borrowing from their former British masters, the Israelis were learning to divide and rule.

This does not sound so bizarre today, when we know that Israel arms and encourages Iran in order to create disunity in the ranks of the Arab states. But a recently published book by the late Simha Flapan shows the practice to have been of even longer duration. In ***The Birth of Israel***, Flapan brings new information to bear on the celebrated case of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.

The Mufti, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, was a religious maniac, a hereditary hierarch and an open sympathizer with the Third Reich. His speeches and conduct became a sort of permanent echo chamber through which David Ben-Gurion in the 1930s and 1940s could make his own proposals sound reasonable, if not essential. He still appears prominently in official Israeli propaganda, amounting to a gorgon's head of his own.

According to Flapan, who played an honorable role in Jewish politics in Palestine from the time of his arrival there, in 1930, this picture of the Mufti needs no amendment. He was a butcher, who saw to it that radical secular Palestinians were "neutralized." But Flapan also had the benefit of the memoirs of Yaakov Shimoni, deputy director of the Jewish Agency's Arab Section and Ben-Gurion's chief confidant on Arab affairs. In a series of interviews in retirement, Shimoni admitted that the Jewish Agency had colluded with the Mufti to keep him in power. It had, he said, established cooperation "with our worst enemy" for three years between 1946 and 1949. Ben-Gurion's slogan "Rely on the Mufti" was not merely an objective recognition of a useful antagonist; it expressed a subjective alliance with the most benighted forces among the Palestinians.

Some variation of this cynical script is being acted out in front of us now. The more chaos and despair that can be created by the police and disinformation forces of the occupation, the more fear there will be that alternatives to the occupation will be riskier or worse. It is this that makes the comparison between Israel and South Africa—a comparison that is superficially unfair—less and less inaccurate.

The strategic majority of the American intelligentsia can therefore be congratulated for a small part well played. They faced one test of courage and integrity, and failed it with flying colors. They encountered one instance where there was no excuse for them not to know, and they chose not to know. It goes without saying that they disclosed a racist attitude to the Palestinians while maintaining this posture of conformity and euphemism. It is emerging that they have also abandoned the Jewish and Israeli forces who sought and still seek to make a *modus vivendi* in Palestine. This double betrayal of internationalism and of the critical faculties is likely to be the chief accomplishment for which this gaggle of pseudo-scholars and pseudo-intellectuals is remembered.

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ARTICLES.

THE MISKITOS COME HOME

Ending the Other War in Nicaragua

ANA CARRIGAN

The would-be assassins of *comandante* José (Chepe) González, three Indian *contras* in civilian clothes armed with machine guns, waited under cover of darkness for the *comandante*'s red Toyota pickup to pass by on its way from his office in the center of the sleepy port town of Puerto Cabezas to his suburban ranch house. As his vehicle drew abreast, the *contras* raked the side of the truck with bullets—the passenger side. The *comandante*, who was at the wheel, escaped. His passenger, an elderly creole woman for whom he had stopped to give a lift five minutes earlier, was killed instantly.

This was no random act of violence. At a time when the war between the Sandinistas and the Miskito Indians has almost come to an end through lack of support among the native population, the order to eliminate this particular Sandinista commander bears all the marks of a calculated political decision, more likely to have originated in some air-conditioned office in Tegucigalpa or San José than in the bush country of Nicaragua's strategic Atlantic Coast.

The Miskitos are coming home—about 10,000 in 1986, who knows how many since. They are coming from refugee camps in Honduras by truck, by foot, by air, even crossing the Rio Coco in convoys of traditional narrow dugouts laden with people, pigs, chickens, puppy dogs, kitchen utensils, "ghetto blasters" and immense sacks of corn, beans and rice. They bear just enough food and seed—provided by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees—to feed each refugee family for three months, until the fertile soil yields the harvest of their first crops.

At a time when the talk of peace is universal, one of the only places where it is a reality is also the most unlikely. This is where the war began. In 1981 and 1982 it was these same riverbank communities, the spiritual and cultural center of the Nicaraguan Miskito territories, that were ravaged by fighting and then left desolate by the forced relocation of villagers by Sandinista troops. Yet today there is a sense of self-confidence that one feels on the surface of one's skin, in the daily give-and-take of casual contact on the street and in the gossip of the bars and discos of Puerto Cabezas. The peace process seems to have taken firm hold, undermining the power and influence of the Indian leaders who have remained in exile, Steadman Fagoth in Honduras and Brooklyn Rivera in Costa Rica [see box, page 155].

Ana Carrigan is a freelance filmmaker and journalist who has just completed a film on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast.

I ask the returning refugees why they have come. Because of the autonomy, they reply; they heard about it on the radio. What does the autonomy mean? It means freedom, they say, and food. Now we can be free here, not like it was before, not like it is in Honduras.

On my last night in Puerto Cabezas, I sat on the veranda of Episcopalian priest Victor Ordóñez, drinking fruit juice and eating homemade coconut pie and listening to my host reminisce about the process that has almost brought an end to the Indian wars. It was that special hour when the gathering dusk brings with it an expanded stillness on the soft tropical air. "If I listened to my wife I would leave here and never come back," he admits. "She is afraid of the *contras*, of the long-haired boys." But although he has a daughter in New Jersey, Ordóñez will never walk away from Puerto Cabezas—even though he knows that working for peace so close to the Honduran border is a high-risk operation.

"It's the money," he says. "They know if this war ends they won't get any more money. Now that the Miskito people are coming home with their arms, the *contras* are trying to keep them back. Telling them that if they come to Nicaragua the Sandinistas will kill them. Throw them all in jail."

"How do you know this?" I ask.

"I hear these things from the people who come back," he says simply. "That's why we tried to send pastors to the camps in Honduras to tell them it was all right. Tell them it's safe to come. But the pastors couldn't get permission to go. The Honduran government is doing this, and the *contras*. And the C.I.A."

Even so, he is cautiously optimistic. "I see peace peeping up on us," he says, as I bid him good night. But he qualifies this almost immediately: "Just as long as we have this young Chepe González around."

Subcomandante Chepe González was 22 years old when Vice Minister of the Interior Luis Carrión sent him to the Atlantic Coast and entrusted him with the internal security of the region. He arrived on the coast in early 1982. The region was in an uproar. Heavy fighting in December along the Rio Coco had led to the forced evacuation of some 8,000 Miskitos from their river villages and the systematic destruction of their houses and their livestock by the Sandinista Army. A further 10,000 Miskitos had fled to Honduras, where Steadman Fagoth and the Central Intelligence Agency were waiting to incorporate them into the *contra* war. For Carrión, who at the time had overall responsibility for the Atlantic Coast region, the polarization in the Miskito territories represented the first serious failure of the revolution. His choice of a youthful, middle-class, dedicated Sandinista soldier from Matagalpa to head up a rescue operation proved inspired. For Chepe González is a natural diplomat.

Carrión's instructions were simple ("I engraved them in my mind," says Chepe): Yes, there was a war; and the first responsibility was to cooperate with the army to defend against invasion. But the situation required long-term solutions, which could come only when the Sandinistas had educated themselves to find out what the Miskito people thought,

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felt and wanted. González was to do his homework, open up lines of communication with the Miskito population and learn from the locals how to begin repairing the damage.

So Chepe learned Miskito, but when he went out looking for people to converse with he found himself regarded as the representative of an army of occupation. There were some, however, who did not turn their back and walk away when they saw him coming; with the male population either off at war or solidly lined up behind the armed resistance, the only ones capable of speaking on behalf of the Miskito population and willing to put Chepe's sincerity to the test were Miskito women. Some, like Dr. Mirna Cunningham (appointed by President Daniel Ortega to the highest civilian post on the coast in 1984), were already Sandinistas. Other women, like Minerva Wilson and Hazel Lau—the latter a former colleague of Fagoth and Rivera—were not.

Throughout the worst years of the war, 1982 and 1983, this relentless group of women dedicated themselves to the education of Chepe and his colleagues. As women, as pacifists, they did not have a lot of support. "Collaborators" was probably about the nicest thing said of them. But they refused to quit: Free our prisoners, they said. Give us amnesty for fighters who want to come home. Let our people return to their villages on the river. Abolish your dumb identity cards. Honor our community land titles. As trust grew, it gradually became apparent that there was no ideological difference, no fundamental principle on either side that was worth a fight. If the Miskitos wanted their own forms of social and communal organization, then, Why not?

In Chepe González's office in Puerto Cabezas is a photograph album in which he and his staff have meticulously assembled a record of events on the coast during the past four years. The first photo is a long shot in black and white. In the foreground is an empty field or clearing. In the background, at the edge of the surrounding woods, a group of soldiers dressed in combat fatigues stand with their backs to the camera. Reverse angle: Another group of young soldiers stand around a Red Cross ambulance. They carry no weapons, and a white flag attached to a crudely crafted pole flies over the ambulance. Someone talks into a radio. There is an air of expectancy. The next shot is blurred. In the middle distance three men, crouched low, are running past the trees.

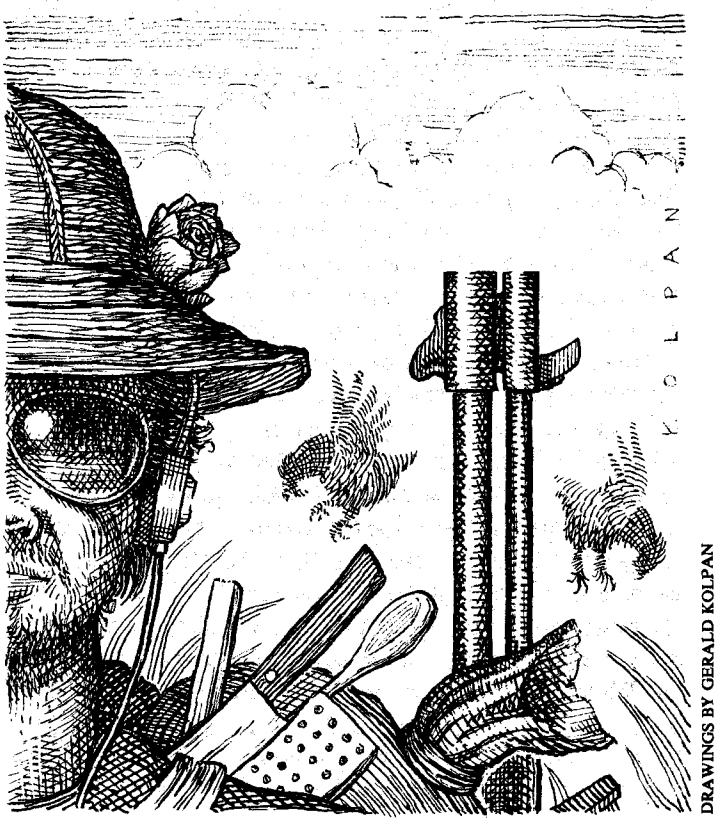
Next comes a group shot. The young soldier in the center dominates the frame. He is significantly taller than the others; his fatigues are starched and pressed. Those gathered around listening to him include some civilians: I recognize the square bald head of Ordóñez and the figure of Mirna Cunningham. "These pictures," says Chepe González, "were taken on May 17, 1985. This was our first meeting with the *contras*."

Yes, says González, he was afraid. The terms of the meeting had been set by the Indians, communicating with him through the Red Cross. He and his colleagues in the Sandinista Army command had decided to pursue the opportunity for a dialogue with the insurgents without consulting Managua. The decision could probably never have been made by nine people sitting in an air-conditioned office remote from the field of battle. González and his colleagues joked about it, anticipating with some glee the surprise they were cooking up for the National Directorate. But González was also acutely aware of the risks, and at the last moment, preparing to walk unarmed into the center of that field, he was seized by the dreadful premonition that he was walking into a trap.

As Chepe started across the field, he saw the Indians begin to lay down their weapons. Then he signaled to his delegation to follow him, and slowly, suspicious still, the two sides approached each other. As the distance narrowed, they began to distinguish faces and could look into one another's eyes. "We knew," says Chepe, "we both wanted the same thing; we were both committed to peace." They retired to a small hut nearby, where talks went on late into the night.

The Miskito leaders were, for the most part, uneducated men who had been drawn into a geopolitical conflict alien to their cause. In the spring of 1984, when Congress cut off aid to the *contras*, Misura leader Fagoth sent his top commanders into Nicaragua with instructions to open up an internal front. To their dismay, the returning fighters met with widespread rejection. Young men took to the bush when alerted to the presence of Misura recruiters. And the message from Indian elders and community leaders was unequivocal—go play your war games somewhere else.

In the pages of Chepe's album the army photographer has documented the closing moments of the meeting. It is night in the first picture, and a group of young men sit shoulder to shoulder around a table studying a single sheet of white paper. The only light is from a hand-held flashlight directed on the document. It is hot in the room and the concentration is intense. The men's bearded faces glisten with sweat.



DRAWINGS BY GERALD KOLPAN

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A close shot shows the flashlight, the document and a hand signing. Another signature. The document and the pen are passed from hand to hand around the table. In the last shot of this series all the participants watch as González adds his signature at the bottom of the page. A series of informal portraits come next; the participants shake hands. They look tired and a little stunned. They are laughing now; they embrace.

"It was 10:30 or 11 at night when we signed the cease-fire," Chepe says. "You can tell the relief on our faces when it was over. We look different, don't we?" The breakthrough came when González told the Indians they could keep their U.S. weapons as long as they used them to help defend their own communities from *contra* attacks. From that moment, the basic terms of the agreement were set. An insurgent army had been transformed into an indigenous peacekeeping militia, supporting additonal cease-fire agreements with other *contra* forces and taking part in the nascent autonomy process.

When the demand for autonomy first surfaced on the coast some years ago, it was viewed by the Sandinistas as a separatist threat. But when it was reintroduced by Cunningham, Wilson and Lau, in 1984, as part of a package of reforms to promote peace and stability, the reaction was very different. Interior Minister Tomás Borge, who took over Luis Carrión's responsibility for the region, embraced the concept of autonomy for the multiethnic population of the coast—Indians, blacks, creoles, Garifonos and Ladinos.

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A remarkable grass-roots effort then got under way to determine the final shape of the autonomy statute. For two years, democratically elected regional- and local-autonomy commission members led workshops and community discussions. What they came up with is not flawless. The Nicaraguan autonomy plan gives the people of the coast the right to own and organize the land as they see fit, the right to a percentage of the revenues (still to be negotiated) generated from natural resources, the right to bilingual education and the right to elect their own local and regional authorities, who will have jurisdiction over the basic organization of community life: health, food distribution, education, culture and taxes.

Maybe now that some leaders of the exile movement Yatama have opened talks in Managua, they will ask for more and get it. Yet as it stands today, the Nicaraguan autonomy statute is a unique experiment in indigenous self-rule on this continent, and embodies a process that everyone agrees will continue and develop.

For the past two and a half years, while the rest of the world was looking the other way, a series of cease-fires pacified one piece of territory after another and permitted the reduction of the Sandinista Army presence throughout the Atlantic Coast. The final sequence in Chepe González's photo album is more recent. It dates from October 1987, when a young former Misurasata fighter named Uriel Vanegas led his force of 400 troops, complete with U.S. machine guns, grenades and rocket launchers, to a cease-fire ceremony in the heart of Puerto Cabezas. Tomás Borge makes a speech; Vanegas makes a speech. "We have come," he tells the crowd, "because here there cannot be two armies." Borge flings an arm around Vanegas's shoulder and the two *comandantes* walk through the crowd to sign formal documents in Chepe's office.

Like others who have laid down their arms, Vanegas is bitter about the leaders of the Indian movement who, in his view, have sold the Indian cause "for a few dollars, a few guns." On a Sunday afternoon, they sit around and gripe about the absurdities and contradictions of the war they have walked away from. "The leaders talk big about how they're fighting for the Atlantic Coast, fighting for the Miskito people," they say. "But it's all talk. They talk Miskito but they don't think like Miskitos. They haven't been here since '85 to visit our people in the villages. They live in the cities. They go from Tegucigalpa to the United States. From San José to the United States."

One last image stays with me. In the small village of Yulu, Vanegas's troops have set up their headquarters. Since this area has long been pacified, there is not much for them to do. They are very young and have spent most of their adolescence fighting and killing. It is all most of them know.

Yulu has a new school now—some benches, a blackboard, a roof—and on a recent afternoon, as the teacher conducted a class for quite small children, a group of Vanegas's troops stopped to listen. Then, slowly, one by one, they came inside. They removed their military caps, put down their guns and stood shyly at the back of the room. They looked like they belonged. □

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THE C.I.A.'S WAR

San José, Costa Rica

Although Brooklyn Rivera and other leaders of Yatama, the main Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast exile coalition, returned to Managua for peace talks on January 23, Nicaraguan dissidents here say that behind-the-scenes maneuvers by State Department and Central Intelligence Agency officials and operatives in the region have been a constant impediment to attempts at dialogue. They say the machinations have included payoffs to rebel commanders and plots to kidnap the young daughter of a key American mediator and murder him and two other church people, with the aim of disrupting the delicate talks.

The months of fast-paced mediation efforts have been conducted by representatives of the Moravian Church, the dominant religious organization on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast, and financed by Protestant organizations. They could potentially prove much more fruitful than the parallel talks between the Sandinistas and the U.S.-backed *contra* coalition, the Nicaraguan Resistance, which are being mediated by Catholic Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo.

Yatama has refused since its formation last June to join the Nicaraguan Resistance, because it feels neither the *contra* leaders nor their U.S. advisers respect Indian demands for regional autonomy and indigenous rights. Negotiators recognize that clandestine U.S. opposition has not been the only obstacle. Both Yatama and the Sandinistas have refused to be flexible at key moments. "We're not dealing with saints here," commented one negotiator. "We're dealing with big egos on both sides." The Yatama alliance itself is fragile, with Brooklyn Rivera, Wycliffe Diego, Steadman Fagoth and Modesto Watson, all formerly rival leaders of exile organizations, vying for the top slot.

But those involved say the actions of U.S. officials and agents have been the main factor preventing a negotiated settlement. "The C.I.A. definitely is undermining in every way efforts for peace. They definitely do not want peace," said one Atlantic Coast rebel leader in San José. Negotiators say three U.S. Embassy political officers—Charles Harrington (based in San José), Tim Brown and Richard Chidester (both stationed in Tegucigalpa) have played a key role in undercutting the peace efforts. Sources here cite a number of attempts to break up the peace initiative:

§ Late last August, according to exile sources and a United Press International report, just as dialogue efforts were getting under way, Chidester attempted to pay a group of Atlantic Coast exiles to join the Nicaraguan Resistance. He hand-picked fourteen creole exile leaders and brought them to a Honduran island resort. Those present were each promised salaries of about $3,000 per month from a secret C.I.A. "political projects" account not connected to the $100 million that Congress allotted the *contras* last year.

Modesto Watson, a Costa Rica–based exile and one of ten leaders who rejected the offer, said he objected to this "undemocratic" procedure and proposed holding an assembly of exiles and refugees to elect creole leaders and decide if Yatama should join the resistance. He said Chidester responded that there was no time "for this bullshit" because "we need to take you all to Washington to talk with Congress and have your photos taken with Reagan in order to win new *contra* aid." Neither Chidester nor his superior, Brown, could be reached for comment.

§ Early last November, rebel sources say, Harrington helped precipitate a split within Rivera's organization. He came to a meeting of the Yatama delegation as intense negotiations were under way to work out the terms for its return to Managua for peace talks, and, they allege, produced a list of U.S. government payments from April through July 1987 to members of Rivera's movement. Rivera's associates protested they had never received "one quarter" of these amounts; Rivera denied any corruption and called Harrington "a cynic." On November 3 seven of Rivera's commanders publicly quit Yatama and joined the Nicaraguan Resistance. Sources within the movement say they were each paid 10,000 colones (about $150) up front and were promised $3,000 in total. Harrington declined a request for an interview.

§ Also in November, according to several Indian sources, a plot was hatched to kidnap, in San José, the 3-year-old daughter of John Paul Lederach, a U.S. missionary who has been one of the two main Moravian Church mediators shuttling between Sandinista and Yatama officials. The plot, which involved a Cuban-American C.I.A. contract operative and several *contras* aligned with the Nicaraguan Resistance, was aimed at getting Lederach, an effective and competent intermediary, out of the process. But Lederach was tipped off about the plot and his child and pregnant wife quickly moved out of Costa Rica. He decided to continue to act, along with Andy Shogreen, the superintendent of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua, as the main intermediary in the peace talks.

§ In early December, rebel sources say, they uncovered a second plot, this one to assassinate Lederach, Lutheran Pastor Ulrich Epperlein and Moravian Pastor Higgins Miller, all of whom were working with Atlantic Coast exiles in Costa Rica. These sources say the assassin was to be paid $50,000 for the three murders. A source familiar with both plots says the aim was "to get [the mediators] out of the process."

MARTHA HONEY AND TONY AVIRGAN

Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan are freelance journalists living in San José, Costa Rica.

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SAN FRANCISCO'S MAYOR

Agnos Did It the Grass-Roots Way

ARLENE STEIN

Last December Art Agnos, social worker turned liberal state assemblyman, captured San Francisco's mayoral race by the greatest margin in this century for a nonincumbent. He defeated the early favorite, city supervisor John Molinari, a brusque moderate in the political mold of outgoing Mayor Dianne Feinstein.

Agnos's victory is a testament to the growing importance of grass-roots electoral campaigns in state and local California politics and to the potential of such campaigns to elect progressive candidates and at the same time democratize the political process.

While his major opponent was busy spending the bulk of a $1.7 million campaign chest on expensive direct-mail appeals and negative radio ads, Agnos was putting together a citywide army of volunteers to carry his message directly to the voters. During the six months before the November 3 election, about 380 precinct leaders and hundreds of additional volunteers combed the city's streets, talking with their neighbors about the election, delivering personal letters to undecided voters and distributing 225,000 copies of an eighty-two-page book in which Agnos set forth his stands on the issues. That grass-roots effort paid off when Agnos took 48.2 percent of the vote, more than the combined total of his two opponents and just shy of the clear majority needed to win.

In the month leading up to the runoff election, Molinari, who came in second, tried to recoup his losses by reshuffling his campaign staff and forming his own grass-roots organization. He painted Agnos as an overspending, antibusiness, "1960s-style" radical who stood for "darkness and doom." But his conservative campaign of the people never picked up much steam, and he lost many liberal supporters in the process. By the December 8 runoff, hundreds of new volunteers, including 200 additional precinct leaders, had joined the Agnos campaign, giving their candidate a handy 40 percent margin of victory.

"The goal was to run a two-way campaign that actually empowered people," said Agnos's field organizer Larry Tramutola. "Our volunteers bridged the gap between the individual voter and the candidate in a way which went far beyond media-based campaigns." And while many Agnos volunteers described their experiences as gratifying personally, more important is that the grass-roots strategy really worked. Tramutola and Richard Ross, who were responsible for creating and managing Agnos's campaign, are two former United Farm Workers activists who have successfully integrated union and community organizing techniques into many recent electoral contests.

Agnos's win confirms what many observers see as the limitations of direct mail and media-blitz campaigning in local elections. "It goes to show that you can't just design some sophisticated campaign technique, insert a candidate, and out pops a winner," said San Francisco State University political scientist Richard DeLeon. Recently San Francisco voters have been turned off by local elections in which virulent mudslinging obscured discussion of the issues. In contrast to media-based campaigns, the grass-roots campaign style is particularly suited to substantive debate.

Agnos's campaign organization created "a public forum which actually discussed the issues" and in which the candidate emerged as a "vital, spirited, thinking man," claimed DeLeon. It was that image, according to several polls, that appealed to the vast majority of Agnos supporters. And it was that image that seemed to attract the scores of volunteers who constituted the base of the campaign organization that made his victory possible.

Perhaps typical of the breed of volunteer who jumped on the Agnos bandwagon was Laurie Nemzer, a 29-year-old genetic counselor who served as a precinct leader in the Noe Valley–Glen Park district, a middle-class, progressive stronghold in the center of the city. She was pulled into the campaign by a friend after meeting Agnos at one of the hundreds of gatherings held in private homes last summer to drum up volunteer labor. An occasional activist in behalf of nonintervention in Central America and women's health issues, Nemzer found Agnos's views to be ideologically close to her own, and she liked the fact that "he was running a different sort of campaign."

"This was the first political campaign I've really been motivated to work on—I'm not usually an electoral politics sort of person, but it seemed to me that Agnos respected people and trusted our intelligence." That sentiment was echoed by many other campaign workers. Nemzer estimated that she spent an average of five to ten hours each week, eventually talking to more than 200 residents in her precinct to convince them to vote for Agnos. According to the election returns, about three-quarters of them did.

But Agnos's support was not limited to San Francisco's sizable progressive constituencies. While he ran exceptionally well among gays, blacks, tenants, the young and other traditionally liberal groups, he also captured the endorsements of the Police Officers Association and several prominent moderate leaders, and pulled majorities in even the most conservative of San Francisco neighborhoods, the west of Twin Peaks area and the Lake Merced district.

Mindful of his image as a social-welfare liberal, Agnos initiated a series of meetings after the November 3 election to allay the fears of local business leaders that, if elected, he would shut them out of City Hall. As a six-term assemblyman, he had consistently voted against legislative positions identified as probusiness by the California Chamber of Commerce. And as a mayoral candidate, Agnos spent much

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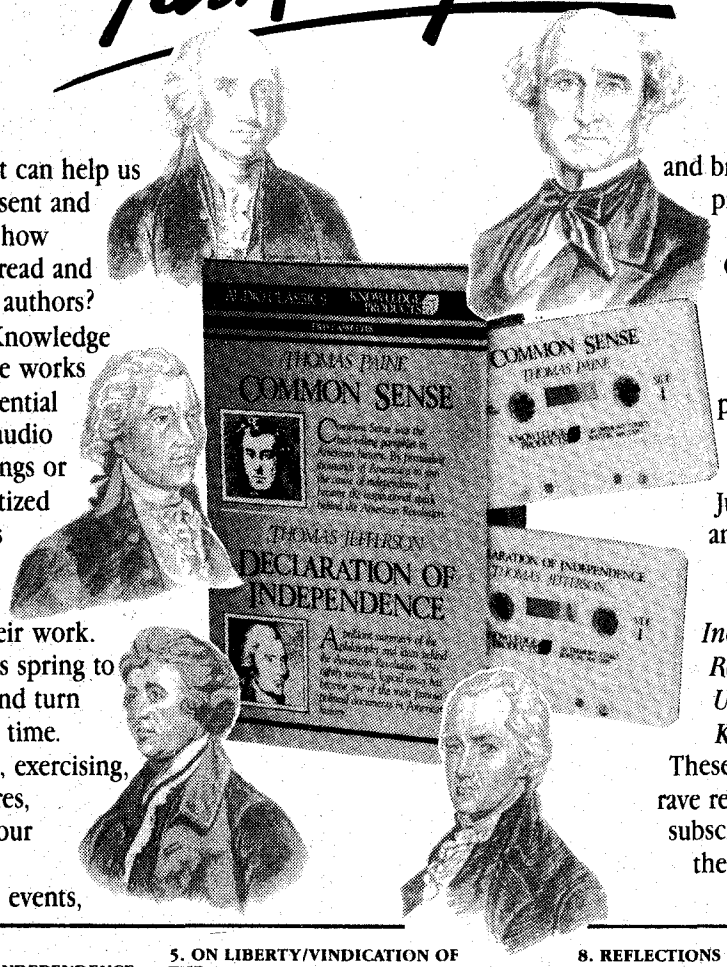

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of the campaign highlighting stands that were at odds with many members of the local business community on key issues: support for stricter rent-control measures, spousal benefits for the domestic partners of city employees, aid to the homeless and incentives for small-business development rather than corporate growth. Yet he emerged from those meetings with the public endorsements of several top corporate leaders, convinced that Agnos would support both downtown and neighborhood interests.

Agnos's potential base of support already extends beyond the "liberal left activist" group. Asians and Latins together make up nearly half of the city's population, and new immigrants arrive daily. Such groups have enjoyed relatively little clout in City Hall. During its nine years the Feinstein administration "adroitly played off different ethnic groups against one another," as Richard DeLeon noted, bringing in moderate Chinese power brokers, for example, while buying off more progressive representatives of that community. Some believe that political outsiders such as the latter will have more of a say under Agnos, leading to a resurgence of class rather than ethnic politics in San Francisco.

Under this scenario, housing and jobs policies are likely to generate important political battles in the years to come. In addition, as the city becomes a larger magnet for new immigrants, the homeless and for people with acquired immune deficiency syndrome, it will be faced with the challenge of finding new ways to meet the needs of those groups. But spending in these areas will be somewhat constrained by San Francisco's budget problems. The city faces a projected $85 million deficit this year; Agnos pledged to make the reduction of it a top priority as Mayor. Part of his plan calls for encouraging new economic development strategies that would pick up the slack left by recent corporate restructuring and suburban flight. Toward this end Agnos has said that he wants to beef up the city's film and maritime industries and encourage the development of small businesses.

Despite its reputation as a place that defies national norms, San Francisco is an important American city: As the center of the country's fourth-largest metropolitan area, it faces fairly typical big-city challenges. In the coming years the new Mayor will confront the sometimes competing demands of three primary constituencies. First, the city's growing underclass—new immigrants, the homeless and AIDS patients—will require increased levels of social spending to meet their basic health and welfare needs. Second, middle-class families, now steadily declining in number, will press for an expanded moderately priced housing stock and the creation of new jobs. And third, many of the large corporations and business services firms, which form the major, though declining, share of the city's economic base, will need to be reassured that San Francisco is not suddenly turning antibusiness. Some will likely lobby for incentives to remain in the city.

During the course of his campaign Agnos presented himself as a candidate who—in contrast to Feinstein and challenger Molinari—would be acutely sensitive to the middle and underclasses without shutting out big business and other established interests in the process, in the tradition of the late Mayor George Moscone. Many of those who know Agnos from his days as a state assemblyman believe that he's as skilled a politician as any for the job, and that he will make good on that promise. San Francisco now has the potential to emerge as a showplace for what progressive policies can accomplish at the local level. □

CULTURAL *PERESTROIKA*

The New China—No Turning Back

ANDRÉ SCHIFFRIN

Beijing

There's gridlock in downtown Beijing, where a few years ago only the rare official car competed with the endless stream of bicycles. The capital's streets are as dreary as ever, but the young people who crowd the sidewalks no longer wear Mao suits; snazzy leather jackets are sported by many of the young men, fashionable broad-shouldered coats by carefully made-up young women. They throng the stores on the main shopping streets, which are jampacked with televisions, even VCRs, very high-ticket items for a country whose average monthly wage is still said to be around $25. There are even SoHo-style boutiques, selling Japanese designer clothes, made in China but still costing several months' wages. There seem to be new hotels wherever you look, each trying to outdo some idealized Hyatt, atriums and rotating restaurants *de rigueur* in even the Chinese-owned buildings. Five years ago, when I had been there last, only the Chinese with official appointments or permits could even enter the few hotels. Now they are everywhere, lounging about the lobbies, thronging the foreign currency stores, having their own business lunches at huge banquet tables in the posh restaurants, as if they owned the place.

Beijing is still the most "foreign" of China's major cities—read destroyed by Stalinist planning—soulless and depressing. Shanghai and Canton seem positively Western by comparison, bustling with shopping streets, alight with neon signs, even bars and nightclubs. Yet Beijing has been transformed as well, with tiny private restaurants, shops, endless stalls and markets selling everything from fresh but expensive produce (eggs at 60 cents a dozen) to locally made blue jeans or discreet pinup calendars.

A mixed group of U.S. writers and artists had been invited by the Chinese Ministry of Culture to see how open China had become after the recent Thirteenth Party Congress. But the prosperity we saw in the streets seemed a far greater index of change than the plans we were told about in our official meetings. Several times during those gatherings, I asked my hosts whether as Marxists they felt that the coun-

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try's changing economic structure would affect its culture. It was one question no one ever acknowledged. But China's rising standard of living is altering the country in three very basic ways: in the expectations built into a consumerist society; in the changing role of its public and private sectors; and in the clear difficulty the government will have, as in the Soviet Union, in maintaining party control over an increasingly independent economic, even cultural, infrastructure.

In 1986 gross national product rose an average of 9.3 percent; after years of zero inflation, a Jimmy Carter–like 6 percent is now the norm. If China is no longer a Third World country but rather a newly industrialized nation, it is due to the vast, stumbling, inefficient, even corrupt state-owned enterprises that control most of the economy.

Take construction, for example: Beijing is filled with new construction sites. In Shanghai alone, the Vice Mayor told us, roughly 600,000 new apartments have been built in the past five years, more than were put up in the preceding thirty. The buildings may be jerry-built, aging quickly, promising endless problems for the future, but they are going up and they are being filled by ordinary people, workers who have been awaiting housing for years—albeit at a cost. A recent spate of articles in the Chinese press complained that the construction firms, all state-owned, were overcharging by as much as 60 percent, bilking the state for their own profit. Or, perhaps, bilking the state to pay the bribes needed to buy raw materials that other firms also need. For each enterprise is now expected to make a profit, and to do so in a poor country, where an antiquated bureaucracy still makes the essential but often capricious decisions, additional payments are built in. As, therefore, is inflation.

But many of the new apartment houses are not built directly by the state. The country's various enterprises, even though nationalized, have a great deal of freedom to act on their own. One of my Chinese friends worked for the China National Metal and Mineral Import and Export Corporation, which is diversifying into all sorts of more profitable fields. It had just bought a tourist resort in the Middle East and was co-owner of Beijing's most luxurious new tourist hotel; was, in fact, acting just like any American corporation, seeking profit where it could. As a result of its new portfolio, the firm could give its workers top treatment. They went to work in new air-conditioned Japanese buses, not the overcrowded municipal carriers. It built better housing for its workers, provided them with a variety of perks—no longer just the annual visit to the Great Wall and the yearly bonus.

My friend proudly showed me his new apartment, a small but comfortable two rooms, kitchen and lavatory crammed full of the latest equipment—television, VCR, refrigerator. At the same time, like practically every other building I saw, his balcony was piled high with drying cabbages and leeks, vegetables that would last him through winter, when prices rose. As it was, he and his wife spent 60 percent of their joint salaries on food. Clearly, the subsidized apartment was a basic necessity. Indeed, a home has become everyone's major form of capital. Even those in state projects can keep their apartments when they retire and pass them on to their children when they die. The apartment compound also helped prepare for the future. Below one could see the building's children playing basketball on their own playground. The youngest would go to a nursery school, in effect a company-run kindergarten. My friend's 5-year-old caused him great concern, spending too much time on the playing field, not enough time studying. How would he graduate into the right primary school, which would lead to the right middle school, which would give him a chance to be one of the lucky 5 percent of applicants who make it into the university, from which he might then get a job in a firm that could construct an apartment house, whose nursery school would be good enough to. . . .

Happily, the new generation is given a few years of indulgence before being hurled into the rat race. Chinese children are now jokingly known as "little emperors," each family's hope, spoiled and cosseted. "I'm terribly torn about this," one young editor told me. "I don't like this competition; I hate the pressure on my child. But what can one do?"

If the pressures are great now, they will be much greater in the coming years. Very much like the Russians, the Chinese are determined to streamline, to economize, to eliminate the number of workers on the state payroll. No one gave us even approximate figures (the Russians estimate that they will gradually do away with 15 million jobs). Just finding employment for the 1 million soldiers now being demobilized from an over-large army should be enough to start with. But the problem goes beyond overemployment. It is at the heart of China's own restructuring and an essential part of its future cultural and economic life.

When the Center for U.S.-China Arts Exchange at Co-

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lumbia University agreed to invite the various writers and artists who made up our delegation, its director, Professor Chou Wen-chung, insisted that we be allowed to see not only the official cultural groups but individual artists, writers, musicians and others, who would be invited to join us, privately and informally. We expected, of course, that these groups would have different concerns. But all those we met seemed to share a certain optimism about the recent party congress decisions. The pendulum was swinging back to a more open society, to somewhat freer expression. But, again, as in Gorbachev's Soviet Union, the Chinese officials were as concerned with the economic costs of their cultural welfare state as with the political problems.

The new slogan was "separate Party from government," and we spoke to many who had been attending long meetings trying to do precisely that in their own organizations, seeking to do away with the parallel party structure that controls, and plagues, every Chinese enterprise or government unit. With some 46 million party members, half of whom have joined since the Cultural Revolution, there is no lack of loyal cadres to look over the shoulder of every cultural group, every factory manager. Not only does the government find itself paying for a vast and cumbersome dual bureaucracy, there is the built-in chaos and inefficiency of having to check everyday decisions with the party hierarchy, not to mention the political caution and control this system assures.

The degree to which the government was preoccupied with these problems was striking from the very start of our visit. One of our first official meetings was with the very charming, even suave, Vice Minister of Culture, Ying Ruocheng, who has acted in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and is known to Americans as the warden in Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor*. An impressive intellectual, Ying nonetheless spoke to us more as a harassed manager. Imagine, he said, a country with 3,800 professional theatrical groups, all overstaffed, all losing audiences to television and film. The principle of guaranteed employment, China's famed "iron rice bowl," is so strong that even during the Cultural Revolution, when actors were dispatched to distant communes, they were still paid their original salaries. Here was a microcosm of the country's economic dilemmas. Like all other enterprises, the theaters had been transformed into profit-making units. But how were these people suddenly to become successful capitalists? Ying spoke vaguely of groups that had set up profitable restaurants, others that sold cassettes. Tickets in any case were "ridiculously cheap," costing as little as 1 yuan, about 25 cents. The government allows them to charge more, 35 cents, even 50. But there is very little the government could do, he kept repeating, even though the Chinese theater is experiencing an explosion of important, even politically daring plays (one of the most successful, *Uncle Doggie's Nirvana*, will soon come to the first New York International Festival of the Arts).

We asked Ying if the government could envisage new forms that would allow freedom of the arts without having them depend entirely on the market. Sounding a bit like a Reaganite official, Ying said he hoped that private support might be found, invoking the Shanghai Symphony, which had actually succeeded in raising some money from local, nationalized industries. But when we met the chair of the symphony's board, vice president of a major state enterprise, we realized that this philanthropist had donated all of $10,000 of his firm's profits, an impressive sum but hardly the makings of a national arts budget.

Other cultural entities had simpler alternatives. Book publishers churn out Sidney Sheldon and Irving Wallace novels with a vengeance. Appropriately enough, Lee Iacocca's memoir provides an even more appealing form of romance, selling some 400,000 copies. The film companies produce kung fu films, but even these have been unable to stem the decline in ticket sales. The mind-boggling 25 billion film tickets sold in 1985 (a fortnightly visit for every man, woman and little emperor in the country) had dwindled to a mere 20 billion in 1987. As elsewhere, television, and to some degree video, were the villains. In Canton, 90 percent of families have a television set, which picks up Hong Kong's MTV as well as the usual TV fare.

Indeed, when filmmakers make good films (and they are making some remarkable ones, as Americans have begun to see) they do so at very considerable economic risk. In Chengdu, for instance, we saw an extraordinary first effort, *Prison Dreams*, which had grossed less than 10 percent of what the average film does at the box office. (Interestingly, the directors could not give us exact figures because they were systematically ripped off, à la Hollywood, by the distribution company, which buys prints but refuses to disclose ticket sales.)

While the publishers and filmmakers, the cultural entrepreneurs, are struggling with problems strangely familiar to their Western counterparts, the question of censorship is still a persistent and unresolved one. Ying proudly pointed out to us that unlike the Soviet Union, which had inherited the czarist machinery of state control, China has no official equivalent of the Glavlit censors. Be that as it may, filmmakers told us that in 80 percent of movies some changes are insisted upon by the censors, sometimes of a minor puritanical nature, sometimes the classic insistence on a more upbeat ending. *Uncle Doggie*, for instance, which is a devastating attack on Communist agricultural policy since the Revolution, now ends with an appropriately optimistic look at the new horizon. Authors have learned caution, have survived difficult periods, by not submitting their work or by limiting themselves to translations. When writing critical articles, they are careful to wait for state policy to change, or they avoid naming names.

The writer who has got into the most trouble by doing precisely the opposite is the investigative reporter Liu Binyan, author of numerous exposés, some gathered in the United States in a book called *People or Monsters?* Liu was one of the people we had most hoped to see. One of the three major writers recently read out of the Communist Party, he had to some degree been rehabilitated by the new cultural policy. He has been allowed to visit the United States and will be a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University this spring. Nevertheless, we had not expected the govern-

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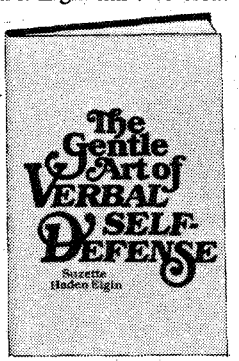
Psycholinguist Suzette Haden Elgin has presented her innovative self-defense principles in a variety of formats. She has given workshops and seminars all over the U.S., including verbal self-defense sessions for doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. Dr. Elgin has also created a self-defense tape and a training manual for people who teach her self-defense techniques.



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ment to arrange for us to meet him. But three of the four controversial figures we had asked to see duly showed up at the Ministry's office. Although surrounded by official note-takers, they spoke courageously and clearly to us. Liu outlined the kind of articles that had got him into trouble, classic stories of local corruption and tyranny that outrage readers anywhere and make them wonder what kind of country they live in. It was clear other journalists admired Liu, even considered him a "good comrade," since he has never questioned the Revolution, only its abuses. But one could easily see the rationalizations and hesitations that had kept others from emulating him.

Liu has paid dearly for his courage, being imprisoned for twenty years when he first offended the state in 1957, during the "antirightist campaign." At that time, he recalled, no one would talk to him. This time he was expelled from the party, he received hundreds of letters of support, many from workers enclosing the few hundred yuan they had been saving. Others, assuming him to be already in jail, sent food and medicine. His relative rehabilitation had been meant as a symbol to the nation as a whole, and wherever we went the Ministry officials made a point of mentioning that we had seen Liu. After an hour of describing the charges that had been made against him, Liu talked about the progress that the country had made. So many changes had taken place, he explained, the young were much freer than ever before to move about the country, to set up their own businesses, to be independent of government control. There was more freedom in China than people realized. If only they would take hold of it.

Impressively enough, these words were echoed not simply by other heroic, exemplary figures but by the young artists and intellectuals whom we met throughout the country. Nothing had prepared me for their freshness and independence. The older, "official" intellectuals were cautiously optimistic. They hoped that better times were ahead, that the old reactionaries who had made their lives so hellish would never regain power. But one could feel the uncertainty and care that was part of the heritage of the Cultural Revolution.

By contrast, the young were bored with the Cultural Revolution. They had heard too much about it, wanted to move on to their own ideas, their own innovations. Their work showed an astonishing modernity. Abstract expressionist painters, composers influenced by Schönberg or even Philip Glass. To be sure, much of their work is derivative, a great deal of it caught in the classic dilemma of intellectuals who wish to express themselves, to find new forms and yet still reach their own people. What was most impressive about these young people was not their answers to our questions about this dilemma or even the work we saw (though much of it was good) but the freedom and realism with which they spoke, their own certainty about themselves.

Like everyone we talked with, they were encouraged by the relative progress of the Thirteenth Party Congress; the backward swing of the pendulum that had crushed the student demonstrations a year before had been halted, some progress could be foreseen. But, as one young filmmaker said forcefully, "We have learned not to rely on any politician, on any new policy. We know that each step forward will involve some steps backward. But too much has changed; it is no longer possible to retreat as China did in the Cultural Revolution."

Of all the people we met, only one, Liu Xinwu, actually tried to explain those terrible years. He had been dismissed earlier in 1987 as editor in chief of the influential literary journal *People's Literature*, ostensibly for offending the sensibilities of Tibetans by running an article that dealt too frankly with their sexual mores. Whether this was the real reason for his sacking, or whether the journalist's first issue was felt to be too liberal in general, was something that we couldn't establish.

China, he explained, had undergone a series of profound shocks. First, the discovery that the country wasn't the center of the world, not even strong enough to defend itself against external enemies. Then the shock of realizing that the world wasn't divided into camps, one socialist and unified, the other consistently inimical. The Cultural Revolution, he felt, had been a genuinely popular rejection by the Chinese of the foreign influences engulfing their culture. Its failure was a collective admission that the rest of the world had to be acknowledged; this was the basis of the extraordinary transformation of all of Chinese life, of the government's new reforms. China would have to continue on this path. As the young people had stated, there would be no turning back, even if strains would remain, among the people as well as within the party, and occasional attempts would be made to close the door again.

We left the traditional compound of the Ministry, where we'd heard this advice. Driving back into the traffic jams, past the new skyscrapers and neon signs, I thought of all the young people who had been so sure there would be no turning back. It was heartening to know this new generation is there, with its courage and independence. No one had been foolish enough to think progress would be unimpeded. But none had seemed to doubt that it would continue. □

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REAGAN'S ROGUES' GALLERY

Deregulation By Sleaze

FRANK DONNER AND JAMES LEDBETTER

Scandals in the Reagan Administration have become as regular as press releases. The House Subcommittee on Civil Service has issued a list of more than 200 Administration appointees accused of legal violations and ethical lapses. The rogues range from the President's California buddies—Attorney General Edwin Meese 3d, Lyn Nofziger, Michael Deaver—to the Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service.

A press that seems to avert its eyes, and a numbed Congress, have prevented the public from perceiving the systemic nature of the scandals, but the facts are clear: Ronald Reagan has presided over a wider range of official misdeeds than any other President in our history.

Some of this corruption stems from the doctrines of the Reagan revolution: If you believe that government is part of the problem and that regulation is illegitimate, then it's not wrong to help your friends in big business or to lie to Congress. But a closer examination of the ethical lapses reveals another pattern: The more opposed the Reagan Administration is to the goals of a given government agency, the more vulnerable the agency's officials are to corruption. This can be as simple as regulators allying with the regulated, or involve more complicated schemes of rule breaking, even graft. If it's politically impossible to shut down a regulatory agency, the Administration reasons, staff it with right-wingers who would rather stall and steal than enforce the law. The coincidence of ideology with malfeasance suggests that willful incompetence and corruption can be effective deregulatory tactics. Following are case studies of five Federal agencies that have been brought to a halt by greedy and derelict appointees.

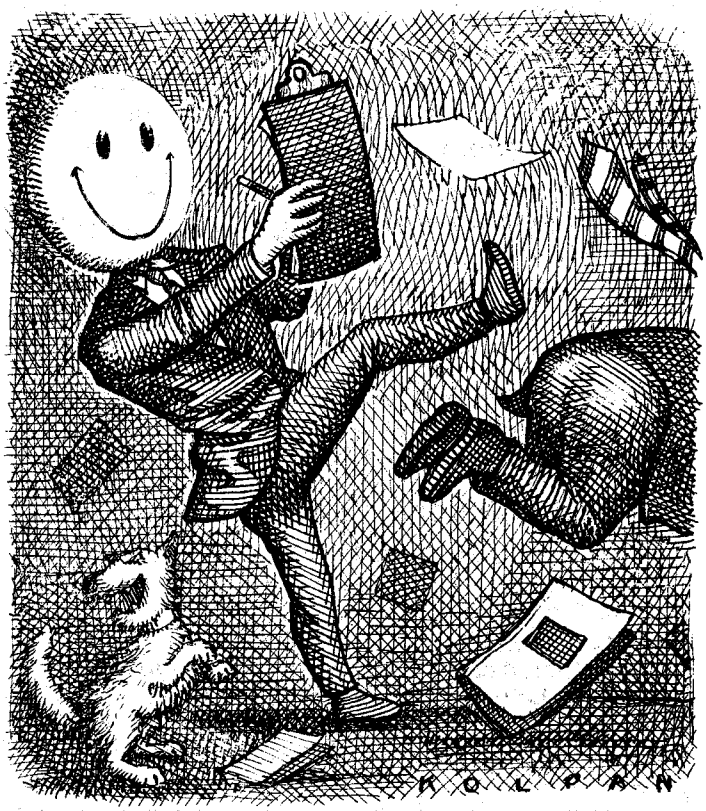
The Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Ronald Reagan's hostility to OSHA preceded his presidency; in 1978, he termed OSHA "one of the most pernicious of the watchdog agencies," and in 1979 he warmly endorsed a bill calling for its abolition. Reagan also claimed that "through things such as OSHA, the government is trying to minimize the ownership of private property in this country."

While Reagan hasn't quite killed OSHA, he has managed to maim it. OSHA's staff has been slashed, and inspections of manufacturing concerns have declined by some 30 percent; OSHA finds far fewer violations than it did under previous Administrations, and it assesses lower fines—$13 million less in 1986 than in 1980, a drop of nearly 50 percent. This newfound leniency doesn't reflect an outbreak of safety, only the Reagan doctrine of industrial self-regulation.

This is not to say that there has been no activity at OSHA. Chair switching, for example, is popular: OSHA has had three official administrators under Reagan, and all have been accused of ethical violations and conflicts of interest. Thorne Auchter was the OSHA head in 1981, an ardent deregulator. He resigned in 1984 after allegations that he approved the dismissal of $12,080 in penalties and twelve proposed safety citations against a Kansas company owned by a firm of which he was president. Auchter also owned almost $22,000 in Du Pont stock during the time he refused to establish a formaldehyde standard, which Du Pont opposed. In addition, the U.S. government paid for trips that Auchter and his aides took to resort hotels in Palm Springs, California; Las Vegas; and St. Thomas, the Virgin Islands. Government-paid junkets are so widespread under Reagan that they merit the title "Billingsgate."

Auchter was replaced by Robert Rowland, a successful fund-raiser in Ronald Reagan's 1980 campaign, who continued his predecessor's inaction as well as his conflicts of interest. Rowland refused to set standards for formaldehyde, ethylene oxide and agricultural field sanitation despite his investments of several hundred thousand dollars in chemical and agricultural companies directly affected by his official decisions.

Top OSHA officials have also shared the President's view that their agency is fundamentally illegitimate and un-American. During Congressional testimony, Rowland admitted that he had said there were "Commies" at OSHA. OSHA health standards director Leonard Vance told one woman on his staff that she sounded as if she'd been "trained in Moscow." OSHA deputy director Jim Meadows told



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the staff that the way to deal with employees who criticize agency policy was to "kick asses and take names."

OSHA officials have also taken a hard line against Congressional oversight. Vance told a Congressional committee that he couldn't turn over his records because his "dog had barfed all over them."

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Like OSHA, the N.R.C. has been handed over to ideologues whose motto seems to be, "Industry, regulate thyself." The Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO), a utility consortium founded after the Three Mile Island accident, has taken over many traditional N.R.C. responsibilities, such as setting safety standards and conducting inspections. "It's not just that policy is being made for the nuclear industry; in many cases it's being made by it," says Michael Mariotte, executive director of the Nuclear Information and Resource Service.

INPO-inspired deregulation has been ratified by the five N.R.C. commissioners, all Reagan appointees. Certain regulators have especially cozy relations with the nuclear industry. N.R.C. Commissioner Thomas Roberts has been under Congressional fire since last April, when he was charged with leaking a confidential memorandum to a nuclear utility that was under investigation for safety problems. Roberts, a former fund-raiser for Vice President George Bush, first suggested that a janitor might have taken the document from his office, then told Congress he had destroyed the memo for fear that someone was setting him up; finally he found a copy in his desk. Roberts later tried to interfere with an Office of Government Ethics investigation of his conflicts of interest. Seven Congressional leaders called for his resignation, to no avail.

While coddling the nuclear industry, top N.R.C. officials have turned against their own employees. N.R.C. executive director of operations Victor Stello has been accused of repeated harassment of employees. In one instance, Stello is said to have tipped off a Tennessee Valley Authority nuclear official on how to sidestep an N.R.C. stop-work order at a plant under construction. When the N.R.C.'s director of investigations suggested that N.R.C.-T.V.A. relations be monitored more closely, Stello shook his fist in the man's face and said, "I'm going to get you!" Stello also tried to force a regional official to undergo psychiatric "retraining" after the official submitted a report criticizing safety at a Texas nuclear plant.

The N.R.C.'s assorted derelictions were documented in a year-end Congressional report. A former Justice Department official in charge of N.R.C. cases told Congress, "I know of no other agency where senior officials have taken as many bizarre and seemingly deliberate actions intended to hamper the investigation and prosecution of individuals and companies [whom] the agency regulates."

The Legal Services Corporation. The right has always opposed publicly financed legal services for the poor. In *Mandate for Leadership*, the Heritage Foundation's blueprint for the Reagan Administration, Alfred Regnery wrote that L.S.C.'s work is designed to "erode the free enterpise system" and concluded that "the only real option is [L.S.C.'s] demise." (Regnery later became the Justice Department's director of juvenile justice but resigned in the wake of allegations stemming from a cache of pornography that was found in his house.)

The call for L.S.C.'s abolition was made as recently as last February by no less than the corporation's president, William Clark Durant 3d. Although every White House budget for the past seven years has allocated no money for L.S.C., Congress has kept it alive, only to see it staffed by a series of greedy ideologues:

§ Michael Wallace was confirmed to the L.S.C. board in 1985, despite the fact that his legal experience included vigorous opposition to the extension of the Voting Rights Act and orchestrating the Administration's infamous "Bob Jones" decision to grant tax exemptions to segregated schools.

§ One Reagan appointee who never got a chance to direct legal aid to the poor was George Paras, who allegedly attacked a Hispanic judge as a "professional Mexican," explaining that there were also "professional blacks, professional Greeks, professional Dagos and professional Jews" who "put their ethnic origin ahead of everything else." His appointment was withdrawn.

§ William Harvey, chair of the L.S.C. board from 1981 to 1982, submitted highly inflated expense reports to the government, including $442 a day for driving expenses between Washington and his home in Indianapolis. Former L.S.C. president Donald Bogard's contract, negotiated with Harvey, his friend, included government payment for a private club membership, twenty-four trips home per year and a year's severance pay if fired. William Olsen, L.S.C. director, collected hefty consulting fees from the government.

Commenting on the Harvey and Olsen scandals, Representative M. Caldwell Butler said, "I'm a Republican, and we bring in these Republicans to take charge of this corporation . . . and it sounds an awful lot like the first thing they do was to go and put all four feet and a snout into the trough."

The Consumer Product Safety Commission. This agency, a relic of the Ralph Nader–influenced 1970s, was another target of *Mandate for Leadership*, which noted that since C.P.S.C.'s abolition "could prove politically unfeasible, the Administration [should] continue the agency but with drastic cutbacks in funding, permitting CPSC to operate only as an educational and informational agency."

Accordingly, after C.P.S.C. lost nearly a quarter of its already tiny budget, it announced that it could not study or correct products that cause 130,000 deaths and injuries each year, including rider lawn mowers, snow blowers and kerosene heaters. C.P.S.C. has not issued a final safety regulation since 1984.

C.P.S.C. officials have not been especially absorbed with public safety. Nancy Harvey Steorts, C.P.S.C. chair from 1981 to 1984, spent $10,000 in government funds to redecorate her office. She also requested that her chauffeur wear a uniform and hat and, advised that this was improper, told him to wear a suit instead. When he claimed that he could not afford one, two C.P.S.C. officials made the purchase for him. Apparently, the chauffeur had to look sharp when he drove Steorts' daughter to see her friends.

C.P.S.C. chair Terrence Scanlon had more serious extra-

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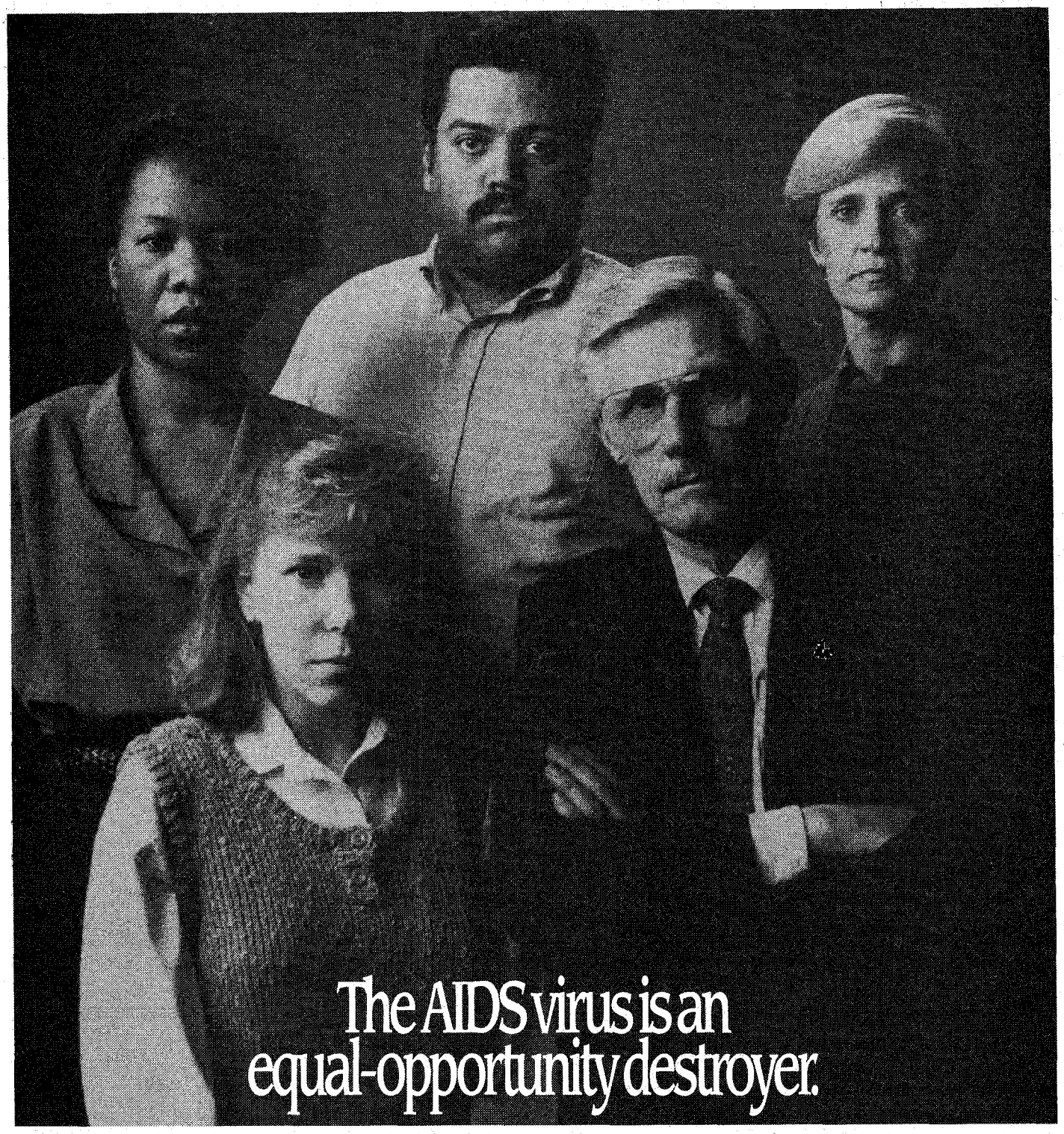

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regulatory interests. During his 1985-86 confirmation hearings (he had been acting chair for nearly a year), Scanlon was grilled about using government staff to handle his real estate investments, church duties and work on behalf of the anti-abortion movement. Scanlon denied the charges, prompting a C.P.S.C. staff member to document fifty-two cases of such abuse. Despite his apparent perjury and a Justice Department investigation, Scanlon was confirmed.

Recently the C.P.S.C. made headlines by banning "all-terrain vehicles." But its critics point out that the commission's years of delay contributed to nearly 700 deaths and 300,000 injuries and that C.P.S.C. let the industry off by not forcing a recall.

Last year Scanlon reassigned a longtime C.P.S.C. compliance chief to a field position. A fellow C.P.S.C. commissioner wrote to Scanlon bluntly: "If your objective is to paralyze the commission, you have succeeded."

The U.S. Civil Rights Commission. Nowhere has the Reagan Administration shown its mean spirit more than in its hostility to civil rights and racial minorities. Commissioner Clarence Pendleton Jr.'s war on civil rights has been so effective that even a fellow Reagan appointee to the commission has called for his resignation.

While the C.R.C.'s decline has been well documented [see Mary Frances Berry, "Taming the Civil Rights Commission," ***The Nation***, February 2, 1985], the gross mismanagement and individual misdeeds at the agency are less known. Pendleton was sued by his former employer, the San Diego Urban League, for fraud, breach of contract, intent to deceive and defraud, and misuse of funds for personal use. He also misled the Senate during his confirmation hearings about $50,000 in expense reimbursements he had received without paying taxes on them.

Pendleton's personal assistant, Sydney Novell, was reportedly the target of a Small Business Administration investigation for self-dealing, conflicts of interest and breaches of trust, caused by the relationship between a consulting firm run by her and one owned by Pendleton. Former C.R.C. staff director Linda Chavez was accused of abusing Civil Service rules, mismanaging Federal employees and mishandling travel payments and financial records during her days at the commission.

A recent audit by the General Accounting Office could not account for $175,000 in Civil Rights Commission funds earmarked for a fair-housing hearing and noted a sharp drop in commission productivity. Pendleton, however, has not suffered; although chairing is a part-time job, he billed the government for 240 workdays in 1985, yielding a salary of $67,344, plus $29,300 in expenses. Last year, he was restricted to working 125 days.

Reagan has said that he hopes his historical imprint "will be one of high morality." Perhaps he was referring to his futile efforts to restore prayer in the public schools or to the "Just Say No" campaign. But the more likely legacy is sleaze. Intentional incompetence is part of a strategy to subvert Congress's wishes. Unless Congress can muster a stronger response than it has yet showed, the regulatory sabotage may endure well beyond our current age of scandal. ☐

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

The Liberal Technocrat

ADOLPH REED JR.

THE TRULY DISADVANTAGED: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy. *By William Julius Wilson. University of Chicago Press. 254 pp. $19.95.*

During the Reagan years public discussion about poverty has moved considerably to the right to focus on the behavior of the poor. In the meaner-spirited versions of this discussion poverty is described as a function of sloth or self-reproducing "pathology"; according to the better-intentioned view it is simply a fate which befalls certain types of individuals or groups. Thus, on the one side Charles Murray calls for a brand of "tough love" to wean the poor from their debilitating dependency on the state, while on the other we get sentimental appeals on behalf of pathetic children who suffer from "a disease called poverty." In *The Truly Disadvantaged* William Julius Wilson attempts to shift the terms of this discussion away from such banalities. His intentions are to "address the problems of the ghetto underclass in a comprehensive analysis" and to "spell out, in considerable detail, the policy implications" of that analysis. He succeeds to the extent that he offers a detailed view that both departs from prevailing mystifications and sets a broader, more dynamic context for discussion. But Wilson has another agenda as well.

Nearly a decade ago Wilson published *The Declining Significance of Race*, which provoked considerable controversy because it argued that socioeconomic factors have become more important than racial ones in determining the fate of black Americans. The book was debated passionately—mainly by black scholars—for several years, though most of the criticism of it arose out of fears about its implications and not from Wilson's arguments, which were hardly unsupportive of an affirmative action agenda.

Of course conservatives have tried to undercut programs such as affirmative action by appropriating Wilson's argument that they are disproportionately beneficial to upwardly mobile blacks, but Wilson himself has consistently maintained that race-specific policies, properly applied, are crucial to the advancement of racial democracy. His argument about the declining significance of race has also been attractive to many on the left, because it refuses to treat racism as a monolithic force, unaffected by historical context. What Wilson offers is a view of race that links changes in the character of racial subordination to shifting national economic imperatives. In folding racial dynamics into economic dynamics this view sidesteps the apparent autonomy of racial conflict in the United States—a problem that has long plagued the left's vision of a politics based on interracial solidarity. Moreover, Wilson identifies himself proudly as a social democrat and shows some irritation at those who have sought to associate him with black neoconservatism. Part of his project in *The Truly Disadvantaged* is to extend his argument about race and economics to the "urban underclass."

Wilson's story is straightforward. Blacks (and Hispanics) moved into cities in great numbers just when the economic hub of urban life was changing from "goods-producing" to "service-producing" activity. But as a result of that change, those cities—mainly in the Northeast and Midwest—had lost the sorts of "lower-skill" jobs needed to accommodate the influx. Clustered in ghetto neighborhoods because of the narrowing opportunity-structure, blacks and Hispanics experienced the social isolation that produced undesirable "concentration effects." The latter include the well-known tangle-of-pathology litany—crime, teen-age pregnancy, female-headed families, out-of-wedlock births and welfare dependency. In Wilson's view, this dynamic can be understood only by recognizing that it derives not so much from contemporary racism as from the operation of impersonal economic and demographic forces.

He takes great pains to distinguish himself from the "culture of poverty" theorists—e.g., Murray and the disingenuous Nicholas Lemann—who ascribe the intractability of poverty to the attitudes, values and behavior of the inner-city poor. For Wilson the characteristics of "ghetto-specific culture" are pragmatic adaptations to isolation and to limited opportunity, both of which have made it "difficult to sustain the basic institutions in these neighborhoods (including churches, stores, schools, recreational facilities, etc.) in the face of increased joblessness caused by the frequent recessions during the 1970s and early 1980s and changes in the urban job structure." The deterioration of those local institutions has led to social disorganization and the decline of "explicit norms and sanctions against aberrant behavior." Unlike Lemann, Murray et al., Wilson argues that the "key conclusion from a public policy perspective is that programs created to alleviate poverty, joblessness, and related forms of social dislocation should place primary focus on changing the social and economic situations, not the cultural traits, of the ghetto underclass." He moves from that conclusion to propose a broad policy offensive based on universal employment and training programs open to the general public. But Wilson supports this view, which has its merits, by a curious reading of American history, according to which the greatest strides in social reform have been made not through conflict and struggle but when "liberals and conservatives find common ground." (How can we fit abolition, suffrage, unionization, the New Deal, civil rights or abortion rights into that framework?)

Most of the components of Wilson's implicit agenda seem reasonable enough, though he neglects to explain where to find the coalition to form such a consensus. This oversight is not so damning; he would probably respond by saying that specific strategies are not his job. Moreover, the thrust of this book lies not in its policy proposals but in its efforts to make public social policy debate more humane, intellectually honest and careful. Unfortunately, on the latter score, despite good intentions and the occasional insight or useful fact—e.g., that black teen-age pregnancy has not been increasing and may be in long-term

Adolph Reed Jr., associate professor of political science and Afro-American studies at Yale University, is the author of The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon *(Yale University Press) and* The Political Thought of W.E.B. DuBois *(Oxford University Press, forthcoming). He also edited* Race, Politics and Culture: Critical Essays on the Radicalism of the 1960s *(Greenwood Press).*

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decline—*The Truly Disadvantaged* fails in several very important ways to break with the premises of the Reagan era discourse on the poor. The specific character of this failure is certainly worthy of the left's attention—especially at a time when the term "social democrat" is being applied to everyone who believes in Social Security, Medicare and public works employment.

To begin with, Wilson's entire interpretation springs from the conjunction of two disturbing and retrograde emphases, which—surprisingly for such a distinguished sociologist—remain unexamined throughout the book. These are first, the focus on "disorganization," "aberration," "deviance" and "pathology" that has influenced urban sociological study at the University of Chicago since the days of Robert Park and the Americanization movement of the World War I era and, second, a deeply patriarchal vision of "mainstream" life.

When Wilson employs a language of social pathology, he is implying a mode of social health from which the "underclass" diverges. What is that model? Because he does not state it explicitly, we must infer it from his list of "aberrant" behavioral patterns that supposedly define the underclass. On that basis, the healthy mainstream apparently is characterized by law-abiding, two-parent families in which women have babies in adulthood with the imprimatur of church and state. Certainly, crime and teen pregnancy would be endorsed by no sensible person, but why should we be concerned with how adult women choose to organize their reproductive activity and conjugal arrangements?

Wilson has an answer. The problem is not that there is anything inherently bad about female-headed households, but, because women earn less money than men, households headed by women are more likely than others to fall below the poverty line. One might think that point would lead him to call for pay equity, universal day care and other initiatives to buttress women's capacities for living independently in the world, but Wilson goes in exactly the opposite direction. He defines the ultimate problem as a shortage of "marriageable" men—going so far as to construct a "marriageable male pool index"—and argues for targeting employment and training programs primarily at unemployed young males who will thus become more attractive as potential spouses. (With respect to "illegitimacy," Wilson, like most underclass theorists, makes no distinction between out-of-wedlock births and teen pregnancies, which in fact are quite distinct phenomena.)

For all its apparent ingenuousness, this view is abominably sexist, not to mention atavistic. Indeed, Wilson's very definition of the underclass focuses almost exclusively on women's behavior. If it were not for violent crime, "pathology" would be recognizable only among females. Wilson—like Park and the others in the Chicago pantheon—suggests that the behavioral patterns of the poor warrant concern because they reflect social disorganization, and yet that argument is undercut by his own insistence that they are pragmatic responses to structural environment. The problem is not the social disorganization of the inner-city poor, but Wilson's and others' distaste for, and reluctance to examine the institutional and organizational forms that the inner-city poor, particularly women, have devised to survive and to create meaning and dignity in lives bitterly constrained by forces apparently beyond their control.

Wilson's reflexive antifeminism and commitment to the language of social pathology account for another element in his failure to escape the prevailing orthodoxy about poverty. The mainstream propriety that he embraces is steeped in a nostalgia now prevalent whenever black intellectuals discuss the problems of the black community. He recalls wistfully the time when "lower-class, working-class, and middle-class black families all lived more or less in the same communities . . . sent their children to the same schools, availed themselves of the same recreational facilities, and shopped at the same stores." He remembers that in the 1940s blacks in Harlem could sleep safely on fire escapes in the summer heat and whites could venture uptown to consume culture. The fact is that that safe, organic community was a more limited, complex and problematic entity than nostalgia would allow, and its glue was not so much nuclear, "intact" families as the imperatives of racial segregation.

Wilson notes that when the strictures of racial subordination were relaxed the black middle class left the inner-city bantustans, and to his credit he does not much indulge in the self-congratulatory prattle, now current among race-relations engineers, about the black middle class's "special responsibility" to provide role models for the poor. Yet he recycles a related component of that nostalgic ideology in asserting a need to "restore" two-parent families without regard to the fact that such a project ignores the structural sources of poverty he describes. Moreover, he seems oblivious to the danger that the new concern with the black family—like the old concern with the black family and the older concern with the immigrant family—is an empty, moralistic ideology that seeks to stigmatize the poor and enforce patriarchal institutions by appealing to a past that may have been largely mythical anyway, and one that was certainly predicated on the subordination of women. This is not to attack the two-parent family, but "family policy" should enable people to sustain whatever sorts of living arrangements they find most congenial—not impose a sacrosanct model.

There is one last problem with Wilson's account, and it has perhaps the most seriously limiting consequences for his treatment of poverty and public policy and for his broader argument about race and economics. *The Truly Disadvantaged* is uninformed by any sense of politics as a factor in the creation and re-creation of the social world. Overlooking codified segregation—the central issue in black life for two-thirds of a century—in a paean to the lost organic community, proposing a macroeconomic dating service rather than attacking patterns of wage discrimination against women, and reading conflict out of the history of social reform in the U.S. all exemplify this failing. Most strikingly, though, Wilson's narrative of the origin of the underclass focuses exclusively on the role of blind,

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large-scale economic and demographic forces. But such forces do not simply occur, nor do they create specific outcomes; they are the products of conscious human action and in turn create contexts within which people fashion specific agendas. The transformation of postwar industrial cities was driven not by some abstract historical force but by a combination of private investment decisions and state action. This impetus was centered around an urban renewal policy that—along with explicitly segregationist priorities in Federal public housing policy—cut off minority communities, displaced large sections of these communities and concentrated them between expressways, office complexes, stadiums and civic centers. There lies the source of Wilson's "social isolation."

Wilson's overview leads him to misread the racial dimension of black activism in the late 1960s and to misconstrue the role of critics like Bayard Rustin and Kenneth Clark. Their calls on the movement to go beyond race to a purely economic agenda did not spring from a broader program of social democracy. Rather, they sought to contain and control the black opposition to urban renewal and to assure that opposition's quiescence by placing it within a centrist Democratic coalition.

Without a clear sense of political action and responsibility, Wilson sees only disembodied strategic alternatives. In fact, the only human agency he recognizes is the behavior of the underclass, the only discernible group in this narrative that has done anything wrong. Other contradictions abound. If the underclass should not be understood as a self-reproducing subculture, why must we focus on its allegedly pathological behavior? Wilson contends that the undesirable patterns will wither away as the opportunity structure broadens. If so, why not define the underclass simply by its joblessness and lack of opportunity? Again, the answer seems to lie at the nexus of moralistic ideology and patriarchal vision dressed up as social science.

His failure to consider the political dimension of his argument allows Wilson to collapse race neatly into economics. That was also a weakness of ***The Declining Significance of Race***, because it led Wilson to overlook the politicization of race in the affirmative action apparatus. But it is especially inadequate in discussion of the condition of the inner-city poor. Careful examination of the bantustanization in American cities

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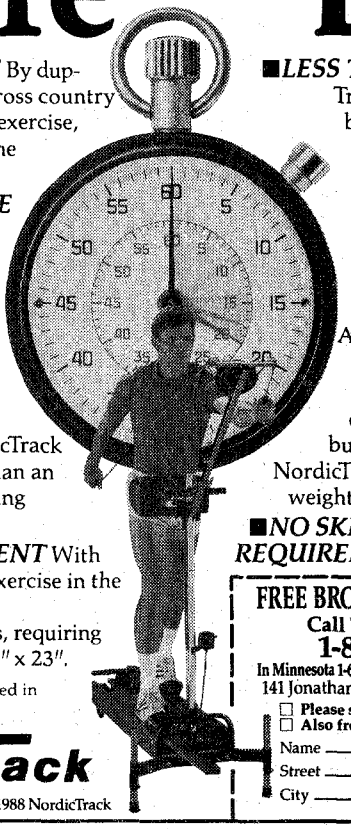

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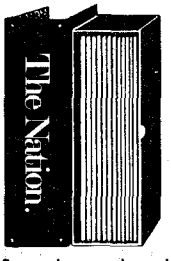

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makes it impossible to distinguish purely racial from purely economic imperatives. Heavily black or Hispanic labor markets are assumed to be plagued by low skill levels and poor "work habits"; parcels of land occupied by minorities are underutilized and ripe for redevelopment because the presence of minority populations lowers market value. Wilson himself notes that numbers of "low-skill" jobs have been increasing nationally but not in those cities where minorities are concentrated. In this context the race/class debate is beside the point. It forgets that the logic of markets is socially and politically constructed and that race enters into social and economic life in complex and indirect ways. While the idea of "institutional racism" is probably an oxymoron, racial subordination is reproduced through the impersonal operations of markets—with or without active discrimination. Wilson rightly notes that racism—a notion that implies individual instances of prejudice and discrimination—does not explain the condition of the underclass; however, like his antagonists he accepts a view that sees only the alternatives of explicit racial discrimination and race-blind structural forces as explanations for black economic subordination. This is in part because Wilson cannot see that history is made by human action. Contrary to the imputations of some of his proponents on the left, Wilson's argument does not juxtapose race and class but race and *economics*, which he treats as beyond the scope of social intervention.

Finally, *The Truly Disadvantaged* is an instructive text for the left as we near the end of Reaganism and, we hope, approach the empowerment of a liberal Democratic regime. Wilson exemplifies the limits of the liberal technocratic vision. His ultimate concern is not with durable patterns of dispossession and stratification but with apparently accidental roadblocks to equal opportunity. Thus, he separates joblessness and poverty in a way that often seems banal. At bottom his view seems to be that poverty is acceptable (if palliated by maintenance programs) as long as opportunities exist for joining the upward mobility queue.

But what if there is no upward mobility queue—or at least not one either fat enough to accommodate the large populations of marginalized blacks and Hispanics or sturdy enough to withstand the dynamics of racial and class subordination? The economy is not neutral with respect to those dynamics. Rather, its inner logic—driven by concrete policy choices—works systematically to concentrate benefits among some groups and costs among others. Blacks, for example, are not "new migrants" who simply happened to show up in cities too late; indeed, they have occupied the bottom of the urban social order throughout the twentieth century.

Much of Wilson's omnibus social program for jobs and training is, under present circumstances, a practical first step. However, his bias against politics and conflict short-circuits his interpretation of the systemic sources of the underclass and threatens to keep everything immobile while we wait for liberals and conservatives to form a consensus. In addition, although his view of inner-city poverty is some improvement over most of those available in public debate recently, his habit of seeing the poor solely as objects of administrative action leads him to adopt the language of moral repressiveness and patriarchy. As a result, he cannot really free himself from the antidemocratic, Reaganite frame of reference. □

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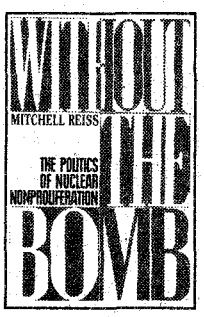

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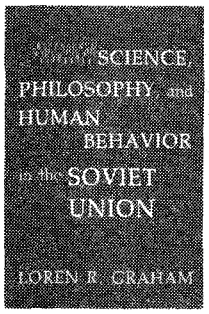

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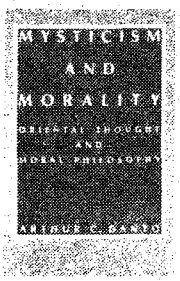

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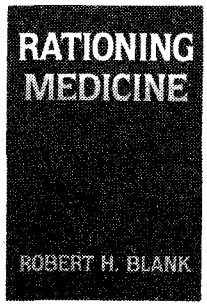

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The Woman Question

SARA M. EVANS

THE GROUNDING OF MODERN FEMINISM. *By Nancy F. Cott. Yale University Press. 372 pp. $29.95.*

At the beginning of the contemporary women's movement "feminism" was a term of unity, adopted by radicals and reformers alike. But by the 1980s deep divisions between feminists had surfaced—divisions that were dramatized in the recent trial of Sears, Roebuck & Company for sex discrimination. Feminist scholars testified on each side of that case. Rosalind Rosenberg, professor of history at Barnard College, claimed that women's experience, rooted in domestic responsibilities, led them to make different employment choices from men, so that Sears could not be blamed for the disproportionate numbers of men in high-paying commission sales jobs. On the other side, labor historian Alice Kessler-Harris of Hofstra University argued that women's choices would be similar to those of male workers but for the historic discrimination of a sex-segregated labor force.

This explosive case exposed a basic, historical disagreement over whether women and men are fundamentally the same or fundamentally different. Feminist lawyers, for example, have argued bitterly over whether the law should afford women special protection in cases of divorce and pregnancy leave. One group insists that equal treatment yields unequal results; the other that any legal recognition of women as different leads to discrimination.

Nancy F. Cott has given us a new way to understand the paradoxes of modern feminism. Her brilliant book literally grounds feminism in history, both as an ideology and as a social movement, and clarifies its inescapable dilemma. As contemporary feminists used the word "feminism" to express their unity, they also extended it back in time, labeling virtually every previous effort on behalf of women "feminist." We can no longer be so ahistorical.

Cott begins her account with the nineteenth-century "woman movement," which included a broad spectrum of female voluntary associations, from suffrage groups led by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton to Frances Willard's Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and a variety of women's clubs. Grounded in the lives of middle-class white women, the movement presumed a solidarity and single point of view rooted in "woman's sphere" as "both [its] point of oppression and [its] point of departure." Whether they argued from difference or sameness, which they frequently did "in the same breath," these women took domesticity for granted in their willingness "to say *we*."

"Feminism" emerged after 1910 as American society rapidly became more heterogeneous and women took up increasingly diverse public roles. By the 1900s, the availability of work in the female-dominated professions and in factories and shops had brought women into contact with the individualistic ethos of the emerging capitalist order. Only suffrage, which wove together women's aspirations for individual citizenship with a desire to enact a different, uniquely female set of political reforms, could continue to hold together the massive woman movement.

Within that movement, however, a group of radicals remarkably similar to 1960s women's liberationists launched a cultural revolt in the name of feminism. In a lively section that is really the high point of the book, Cott describes this revolt and the personalities associated with it, including Greenwich Village radicals like Rheta Childe Dorr, Crystal Eastman, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Their initial organization, Heterodoxy, "a consciousness-raising group before the term was invented," mounted a political challenge to cultural convention. As Mary Heaton Vorse commented in a letter to a friend, "I cannot imagine anything that would affect better the moral health of any country than something which would blast the greatest number of that indecent, immoral institution—the perfect lady—out of doors and set them smashing and rioting" like the suffragists in England.

Cott sensitively explores the internal contradictions of feminism, which from the outset loudly proclaimed women's rights as individuals—rights to political participation, to economic choice and to heterosexual intimacy—*and* the importance of sex solidarity. Women's rights received particular political expression through the Congressional Union and its successor, the National Woman's Party, led by Alice Paul, and Cott retells in new detail the story of the N.W.P. and its strategic conflict with the larger National American Woman Suffrage Association. Paul's uncompromising militance attracted feminists to her organization, where they could assert women's power by mobilizing the existing female electorate in Western states and by demonstrating in Washington. These were the women who chained themselves to the White House gate and endured force-feeding while on hunger strike in prison.

But it was the N.W.P., as feminism's institutional representative, that narrowed its meaning following World War I and the suffrage victory. The N.W.P. shifted feminism's focus to a single-minded insistence on legal equality via the Equal Rights Amendment, and severed its links with sexual expression, social revolution and cultural assaults on the meaning of gender. This emphasis on legal sameness also excluded numerous issues rooted in women's racial and class diversity: the disenfranchisement of Southern black women, protective legislation for women workers and birth control.

Cott argues rightly that there were strong threads of continuity between the 1910s and 1920s, and that the demise of feminism was not simply due to a shift from suffrage activism to electoral politics. Women's extensive voluntary activity between the two world wars was clearly an extension of the forms and methods that were the bedrock of the woman movement. At the same time, the very diversity of women's voices—in the absence of the unifying symbol of suffrage—had made the grammatically singular "woman movement" an anachronism. The tension between feminist goals for individual freedom and for gender solidarity found new expression in opposing camps battling over the Equal Rights Amendment and protective labor legislation in the 1920s. The N.W.P. claimed liberal individualism to be the essential content of feminism, forcing many women to abandon the label "feminist" in defense of laws protecting economically vulnerable female workers.

Sara M. Evans is the author of Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left *(Vintage) and the co-author, with Harry C. Boyte, of* Free Spaces: The Sources of Democratic Change in America *(Harper & Row). She is currently completing a book with Barbara J. Nelson,* Wage Justice: Comparable Worth and the Paradox of Technocratic Reform.

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Cott not only recapitulates these battles but places them in a new frame. The context in which feminists tried to work out their dreams and goals undermined the creative tension that had allowed an earlier movement to link sameness and difference in a "stereoscopic view." In rich detail, Cott describes the appropriation of women's sexual revolt by commercial interests and social scientists who glorified "normal" heterosexual relations in the "companionate marriage" while stigmatizing lesbians and by implication all intimate relations between women. Though increasing numbers of married women entered the paid labor force through the 1920s, feminists retreated from asserting the importance of economic independence (with its related critique of the institution of marriage). Instead, they settled for a defense of economic choice in the context of marriage and motherhood, or for an economic defense of women's work outside the home that emphasized its links to traditional family responsibilities.

Similarly, the political climate of the 1920s helped to turn patriotic women's associations like the Daughters of the American Revolution—once considered part of the woman movement—into virulent right-wing organizations. Red-baiting, like homophobia, splintered women's organizations and weakened support for reforms like the child labor amendment and the Sheppard-Towner Act. The latter, passed in 1921, provided matching Federal funds for maternal and child health centers to educate mothers in personal hygiene and nutrition. But even this minimal program had been destroyed, at the end of the 1920s, by a political alliance of the American Medical Association and the right wing.

Cott shows that divisions among women also deepened as growing numbers of female professionals absorbed the emerging ethos of professionalism, which emphasized rational, sex-neutral, meritocratic standards. The assumptions that gave women a claim to professional acceptance also undermined their capacity to name and resist the pervasive discrimination that reversed their advances when their jobs became more attractive economically to men.

Most of Cott's vividly told story is well known to historians, but she puts the pieces together in a new and suggestive way. The national focus of her book lays the groundwork for numerous local studies, which will test, expand and revise her conclusions. To what extent, for example, were National Woman's Party activists outside New York City imbued with the cultural radicalism of New York's Heterodoxy?

There is one key contextual dimension missing from *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, and that is the changed meaning of political participation in the 1920s. In the nineteenth century, "politics" encompassed many kinds of communal activity, made visible in the massive parades of ethnic associations, artisanal groups and labor organizations. This was true even in the urban South until the brutal disenfranchisement of blacks. Moreover, women themselves broadened the meaning of "public" through their vast array of voluntary associations, from which they launched many movements for moral and social reform. But by the 1920s, politics had diminished to the individual act of voting, leaving little space for public expressions of solidarity and diversity. The state itself had become the locus of a bureaucratized and professionalized public life, spurred in part by women's own efforts in the arena of social welfare. Just as half the population gained the rights of citizenship, the very meaning of the term had been severely depleted.

Cott argues that the inability of the first wave of feminism to resolve its contradictions made a second wave necessary and inevitable. That raises again the question of how women today can say "we." Feminism in the past two decades has also had a stormy history, rife with conflicts and tensions, and it has recapitulated the shift from a white middle-class base to greater diversity. This time, however, that shift has new and exciting dimensions. While many women interpret feminist demands in purely individualistic terms—"dress for success," "equal opportunity"—others point to the need for a coalition of women's communities. There is no "woman," nor are there simply individual women. Instead, we have many groups of women, and the voices of black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and lesbian feminists bring a new richness to the meaning of female difference.

Within this context, perhaps the old arguments can find a new terrain. Between sameness and difference lies the very possibility of this cultural revolt called feminism. Clearly feminists must maintain the tension rather than gravitate to one pole or the other, because in that is where the transformative possibilities lie. □

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THOMAS M. DISCH

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Man and Superman
Another Antigone
Symphony of Rats
Oil City Symphony
The Chosen

The Public Theater's projected six-year Shakespeare marathon got off to a good start with *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Not an epochal performance, but sturdy and serviceable, with just enough of a design overlay (Brazil: its pretty jungles, bright clothes, catchy tunes and ole black magic) to show that someone had an idea, but not so intrusive an idea that Shakespeare's meaning was wrenched out of shape. The farce is not overdone, though F. Murray Abraham does his utmost, as Bottom, to convince us that this is *his* play. So it might be, were it not for the countervailing lyric forces of the faerie realm, which benefits greatly by being transposed to the Brazilian never-never land designed by Andrew Jackness and costumed by Frank Krenz. There Carl Lumbly and Lorraine Toussaint preside as Oberon and Titania in a style of High Faerie that owes nothing to the glitter-dusty conventions of Mendelssohn, Tolkien, et al.

Geoffrey Owens's Puck steals the show, as Pucks have done time out of mind. Owens (a vivid presence in last fall's *The Tamer Tamed* at the RAPP Arts Center, and a regular on *The Cosby Show*) cavorts about the stage like a one-man menagerie—a monkey, a cat, a cockatoo—just such a Puck as Brazil's supernatural ecology might be expected to produce. When Puck crows his signature line, "What fools these mortals be!" it is with the authority of something imaginably other-than-human.

The mortals themselves comfortably inhabit the middle realm between farce and poetry that is this play's bravura new world. Elizabeth McGovern, who was a droll and sprightly Julia in last summer's production in Central Park of *Two Gentlemen*, is droll and sprightly once again as Helena, but she does bear down rather heavily on the rhymes of her Act I couplets and generally seems less at home in "Athens, and a wood near it" than her friend Hermia, played by Julia Gibson, in a most auspicious New York debut. Rob Knepper as Lysander and Bruce Norris as Demetrius complete the quartet of foolish mortals with deference and grace, well-bred young gentlemen letting the ladies have the spotlight. Only Jack Ryland as Theseus seemed to fall short of his role's requirements, delivering his Act V pronouncements with world-weary sanctimony, in the manner of a Mafia capo at a church supper.

One hopes that the directors who will follow in A.J. Antoon's footsteps will be able to maintain the high standard he's set. The one regrettable feature of the six-year project is that the televising of each play is to be limited, in most cases, to an hour, according to present proposals. Presumably, this means a Highlights from Shakespeare approach, with a celebrity commentator supplying predigested appreciations of the Bard's wit and wisdom. But that is a churlish foreboding in the circumstances. Better half a loaf—and indeed, for those who can get to the Public Theater the whole loaf's still to be had. (One small caution: that through most of the month of February, F. Murray Abraham will be on a leave of absence, but he'll be back in March.)

George Bernard Shaw is one of literature's great object lessons in the danger of supposing oneself to be a sage. His twenty or so best comedies have proved as sturdy as the novels of the great Victorians, but get him talking philosophy and he can be as dull as any semiotician. Ann Whitefield, the heroine of *Man and Superman*, entertains a similar abhorrence for the philosophizings of John Tanner, the hero of that play and Shaw's most egregiously self-aggrandizing self-portrait. And she's right: Tanner's warmed-over version of Bergson and his high-sounding "life force" are a crock of vintage *fin de siècle* ectoplasm. But Tanner himself is rather amusing, and dresses well, and is *quite* rich, and even, it would seem, is a person with no discernible sexual appetites, which, from a certain point of view (Ann's), must also be counted in his favor. Ann's matrimonial pursuit of this handsome humbug constitutes the main plot of *Man and Superman*, and the subplot recounts a parallel marriage-for-money already signed and sealed but with the money not yet delivered. Shaw spins out this meager tale to three full acts with wonderful parsimony; to four acts, if it is performed with the superfluous "Don

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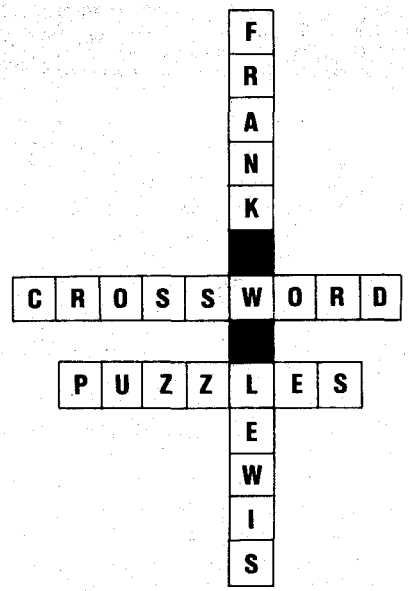

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Juan in Hell" as Act III. The Roundabout Theatre in its current production has wisely dispensed with the third act and trimmed down the remaining text to an expeditious two and a half hours that zip along with hardly ever a dull moment—and those few are Shaw's fault, not director William Woodman's, who has maintained the Roundabout's reputation as the city's most reliable source of meat-and-potatoes productions of modern middlebrow classics. It is also the most sumptuous of Off Broadway theaters, having served originally as a ballroom on the premises of Tammany Hall.

David Birney and Frances Conroy spar gracefully as John and Ann until the final off-color moment when they are required to do onstage what was much better done out of sight. They *kiss*, and the audience can only cringe. Again, the fault is Shaw's. For all his blather about the life force, S-E-X remains for Shaw a subject as ineffably baffling as the Holy Trinity was for Augustine, and he, for all his wit and *élan vital*, remains an old maid complacent in his essential virginity. Usually, he had the good sense to take a wide detour around the realm of Eros, but in *Man and Superman* he tries to hint, by piling up parallels to *Don Giovanni*, that his John Tanner corresponds in some way to Don Giovanni. The correspondence is tenuous, and the play doesn't at all suffer by the excision of its third act. Critics who would like to assimilate Shaw into the canon of modernism will be offended, since the disjunctiveness of the Don Juan act represents one of Shaw's few formal qualifications as a modernist, but Shaw's real greatness lay in his indifference to the *Zeitgeist*. That is why his plays have so well survived the changes in sensibility that have been brought about by feminism; not that his ideas anticipated feminism, but that, like many homosexual authors (which Shaw was not), he could see women as social beings more clearly than men whose vision was impaired by erotic wishful thinking, such men as Octavius Robinson in *Man and Superman*, a callower version of Marchbanks in *Candida*. Michael Cumpsty plays Octavius at the Roundabout with true U twittiness. But the best fun and the broadest performance of the evening was provided by Harriet Harris as a thoroughly self-aware philistine determined to acquire a fortune solely by her command of the right tone. The sets (by Bob Shaw) and costumes (by Andrew B. Marlay) were, as usual at the Roundabout, plausible and pretty, with just the same degree of stylization as the text they ornamented. Score one more for the Roundabout.

George Grizzard, in a grizzled white beard to match his name, is the tragicomic hero of A.R. Gurney Jr.'s *Another Antigone* at Playwrights Horizons. He plays a professor in the classics department of an unnamed Boston university in an era of reduced budgets and intellectual aspirations. When Judy Miller, a candidate for valedictorian, offers her own god-awful blank-verse update of *Antigone* in lieu of a term paper, Grizzard groans his opening line: "Another *Antigone*!" and from then on it's all nemesis, and very entertaining. Marissa Chibas, as the overbearing undergrad Antigone, has as great an irrational self-confidence in her thespian powers as Shakespeare's Bottom, and when Grizzard, that old Creon, refuses to give her play at least a B, she launches a campaign against him, including charges of anti-Semitism, that leads to a proper catastrophe. Debra Mooney, as the Dean of Humane Studies, serves ably as a one-woman Greek chorus refereeing the combat and setting the right, light tone. But she ought to get extra pay for hazardous duty: She has to smoke so many cigarettes with such addictive relish in the course of the intermissionless hour and a half playing-time that she will surely destroy her health if the play has a long run, which I think it merits. *Another Antigone* may not be another *Antigone*, but it's certainly a contender for Ten Best consideration, by virtue of the smooth-running machinery of its plot, a wry sense of humor and the reciprocating obnoxiousness of Grizzard and Chibas.

However, I should note that the colleague with whom I saw it took offense at Gurney's characterization of the Jewish-American Princess antiheroine, and we argued about it for hours afterward. My mind wasn't changed, and neither was his, and those whose sense of fairness dictates that goys should never make fun of Jews, or straights of gays, or whites of blacks, would be advised to avoid *Another Antigone* as a likely source of tsoris.

I would advise that *anyone* avoid Richard Foreman's *Symphony of Rats* at the Performing Garage, except that it

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was clear from the merry reaction of a significant part of the audience on the night I saw it that there *is* a kind of person who derives satisfaction from such "performance pieces." My own conviction is that the emperor was exhibiting himself with unusual flagrance, and that exactly this, his full frontal nudity, was what the audience was getting off on. Foreman's basic *modus operandi* is to combine the it-pays-to-be-ignorant silliness of transvestite camp like *Psycho Beach Party* with portentous "poetic prose" inveighing vaguely against the Forces of Repression. The trick is to seem to move fast without such temporal reference points as plot or paraphrasable intellectual content. He heaps together junk-pile party decorations, an italicized, eyebrow-arching acting style, bogus poetry (the worst of which he drones over a TV monitor mounted on an orange-crate "robot") and even assorted student still lifes in muddy colors, which the cast of four (plus two mute stage hands) brandishes at the audience like protest placards.

Wagner aspired to *Gesamtkunst*, a total art uniting painting, music and poetry; Foreman achieves *Gesamtkitsch*. And, as his press release notes, his accomplishment has been "recognized by three *Village Voice* OBIE Awards, two New York State Creative Artists Public Service Awards, a Rockefeller Foundation Playwrights Grant, a Guggenheim Fellowship, as well as grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts." Was ever emperor more beloved?

Foreman didn't achieve his Best Dressed status all by himself, of course. He has tailors and they should be credited, foremost among them the critics of *The Village Voice*, where Michael Feingold has lately saluted *Symphony of Rats* in terms presaging another OBIE and setting a definitive example of how to dress an emperor. Feingold begins by assuring us that "his wonderful works remain as elusive, as dazzling and maddening, as ever," and then elucidates: "Part of the comedy with which Foreman's work is suffused, ranging from high irony to slapstick, comes from his roots lying deep in the dramatic past, while his mind may wander anywhere. . . . As a result, no interpretation of a Foreman work is ever wholly valid, and the most dignified thing a critic can do is indicate for his readers the general preoccupations and imagery of the piece at hand, and then bow out gracefully."

What such critical loophole-making amounts to is a Nixonian ploy for establishing plausible deniability. Should one object that Foreman's jokes tend to be puerile (as when, after the leading character, the "President," has trouble with his [golf] swing, the refrain is repeated, with many knowing winks: "But it don't mean a thing"), Foreman can disclaim responsibility by insisting that his intention is to assume the mantle of puerility: his aim is to be "bad" in quotes. Hence, all the eyebrow-waggling. Similarly, when the President mouths the line, "This is *highly* interesting," the self-reflexive, oxymoronic truth of the matter is that it (what we're watching) could not be more stupid and dull. Foreman's aesthetic is highly akin to that of the painter David Salle, as set forth by Arthur Danto in the March 7, 1987, issue of *The Nation*: not the minimalist "Less Is More" but a pejorist "Worse Is Better." (From the Latin *pejor*, "worse.") And if one should inquire why this is so, the pejorist need offer only a shrug or a sneer, since advanced art, by definition, lies outside the bounds of bourgeois rationalizing. My own suspicion is that this vein of avant-gardism represents simply the tag-end of the venerable tradition of press-agentry as art. This is more easily accomplished by the artist's (apparently unmotivated) eccentric behavior than by any declarable "position," since one can agree or disagree with a known position and then go one's own way, but one tends to linger (the artist hopes) before what is baffling and mysterioso, for which reason these are the special realm of charlatans. That is the theory. In practice, I suspect the audience for such works is now chiefly such lesser or failed charlatans as have not developed a full-scale scam of their own; a kind of year-round Halloween parade of would-be Warhols, Dalis and Foremans who haven't quite got their act together and taken it to a funding foundation.

Oil City Symphony at the Circle in the Square Theatre on Bleecker Street is a fairly thorough re-creation of a corn-ball musicale presented in an Ohio high-school auditorium by four middle-aged amateur musicians, who sing and play some pop concert favorites and some of their own exercises in easy listening. At one point the audience is urged to its feet to join the artistes in the hokey-pokey. For some, the effect of so much

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really, really sincere kitsch might be akin to total immersion in a Norman Rockwell painting, but the show's implacable wholesomeness is spiced by the shrewd characterizations of the four performers (who also wrote the show's original music): Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, Mary Murfitt. It's the perfect show for friends visiting from the Midwest, especially if they'd had a hankering to see something scuzzy and bohemian, like *Symphony of Rats.* Not because *Oil City* is campy but because it's an affectionate and valid tribute to the grass roots of our musical culture, the people who give piano lessons and lead choirs and march in bands for no other reason than the beauty and excitement of making music happen. Hurrah for Oil City!

But alas for Chaim Potok's musical version of *The Chosen*, which expired after a too brief run of six performances and fifty-two previews, going down in history as Off Broadway's costliest flop. A lengthy post mortem is not in order, since the show was never really a contender. Most of its songs were innocuous, and the lyrics ranged from below average to satisfactory. The one big show-stopping moment-of-truth musical number, however, was the real McCoy. When George Hearn sang "Silence" at the end of Act II, you could hear twenty different and distinct snuffles from the seats around you, and it wasn't backers mourning their investment.

Unusual for any musical nowadays, the best thing about *The Chosen* was the book—and even that was not as good as the novel. What I chiefly (and still vividly) remember from reading the novel fifteen years ago was Potok's sympathetic and illuminating view of American Hassidic culture. On the stage of the Second Avenue Theater, the chorus line of Hassidim came across as . . . a chorus line. Even so, I have to award it at least half a thumbs up, not just for Hearn's performance but for those of Rob Morrow and Richard Cray, who traverse the mine field of the plot (it concerns one of the last taboos, the passionate friendship of teen-age boys) with a good deal of emotional honesty. Patricia Ben Peterson had one song, which served no dramatic purpose, but she sang it sweetly. And the sets by Ben Edwards would have been worth the small fortune that must have been spent on them, if only they'd been able to see a little more use. $2,500,000! *Oy vay.* □

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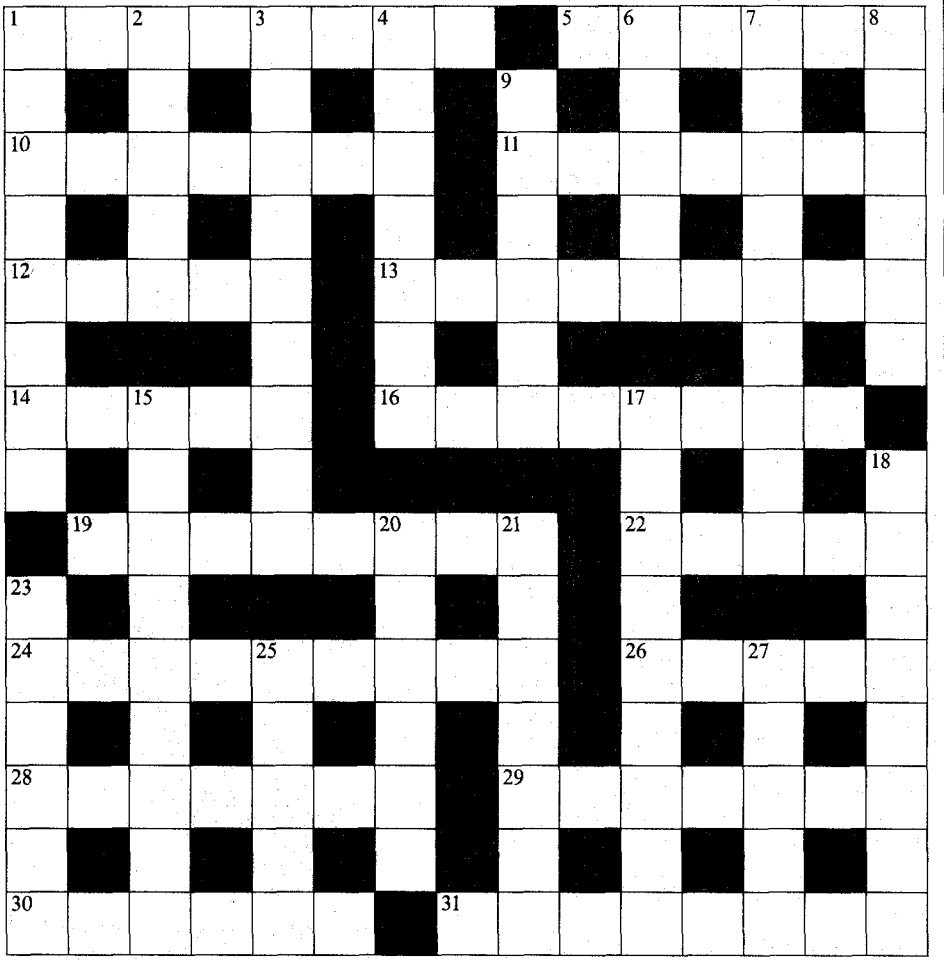

ACROSS

1 and 5 That's what the young woman expects for the West Point ball, but it may be proper for the prisoner. (8,6)
10 A so-called criminal female goes to school in California, possibly with clammy association. (7)
11 More than triple sec? Fido might prefer his! (4-3)
12 Where the actor may hope to succeed, as a beginning. (5)
14 and 13 The one someone at the scene of the theater accident asks about? (5,9)
16 One wouldn't expect it at the front stoop, as the crabby visitor is supposed to go. (8)
19 Poker debts? The college type might get this before the test. (8)
22 The bird might be shown here to use less. (5)
24 It kept the old stage viewable, and celebrities still like it. (9)
26 and 28 A little horse swapping as a regular part of the business? (5,2,5)
29 Bring back a chit to one, an old-school-tie type, possibly. (7)
30 A rather fancy death with me inside, possibly. (6)
31 How Westerners used to travel, putting a buck possibly in games not properly played. (2,6)

DOWN

1 Madam shortly will meet those who traditionally come to the flame, but the woolly type are all gone now! (8)
2 Slops all over, as they say! (5)
3 Have confidence in the act—you might have something like it on your house! (5,4)
4 Formulae for things possibly made ready on the range? (7)
6 The type of Moslem that holds something shiny in back? (5)
7 Things like clepsydrae and hourglasses—they've been around for quite a while! (3-6)
8 Being a pain in the neck, as a judge might be? (6)
9 Minded a body getting mixed up with a couple of points? (6)
15 When one gives it, one expects to be 9. (9)
17 What my grandfather's clock did might deter someone close to second. (4,5)
18 It takes this, according to some querulous people, and skill of a sort! (3,5)
20 Rather wild parties, with the soldier in what comes from mine. (6)
21 As yet it isn't quite right, but it's possibly too much of a good thing. (7)
23 Everyone has to die somehow, so some countries were with us during the war. (6)
25 Some actors might have current association with the French publicity, in short. (5)
27 Go up, when about to conquer what you are with the bills unpaid. (5)

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THE F.B.I. INVADES U.S. LIBRARIES

LIBRARIANS UPSET BY ATTEMPTED SURVEILLANCE

Americans concerned with civil liberties and especially with academic freedom should be alarmed at a campaign being conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation known as the Library Awareness Program. This Program is part of a national counterintelligence effort and aims to persuade librarians at public and university libraries throughout the United States to help the F.B.I. in tracking down foreign spies or other intelligence agents who may be using the libraries. It is clearly an effort to turn librarians into government informers.

Columbia University, the New York Public Library and the New York Library Association became incensed at the F.B.I.'s new policy and termed it an "intrusion on the privacy and academic freedom of library users." One method of surveillance advocated by the F.B.I. is for a librarian to hand over the names of foreign students or other foreigners, together with the titles of books borrowed by them. Apparently anyone reading Karl Marx or other radical writers would then be in for a lot of trouble.

In an authoritative article on September 18, 1987, *The New York Times* reported: "F.B.I. agents have asked librarians in New York City to watch for and report on library users who might be diplomats of hostile powers recruiting intelligence agents or gathering information politically harmful to United States security. The initiative has upset library officials.

The Columbia library, when approached by two F.B.I. agents in June 1987, refused to cooperate in any way with the Library Awareness Program. Later, on October 1, the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association issued an advisory statement attacking the F.B.I. and alerting librarians to the "unwarranted government intrusions upon personal privacy" that threaten "the First Amendment right to receive information." The Committee called the F.B.I. snooping an "unconscionable and unconstitutional invasion of the right of privacy of library patrons." It stated that "libraries are not extensions of the 'long arm of the law' or of the game of Big Brother."

We defenders of civil liberties denounce the F.B.I. Library Awareness Program as an outrageous and cynical violation of the Bill of Rights.

Write your Senators and Representative, and Director William S. Sessions of the F.B.I. These unconstitutional activities should be stopped.

Corliss Lamont, Chairman
Edith Tiger, Director

National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010

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